



STATUS OF POLICING IN INDIA REPORT

2020-2021

Volume II

Policing in the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Cover Photo: An artist wearing a coronavirus-shaped helmet and a protective suit stands next to a police barricade as he requests people to stay at home during an extended lockdown in New Delhi, India, April 30, 2020. ©REUTERS/Adnan Abidi

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List of Abbreviations

BHK	Bedroom, Hall and Kitchen	NCT	National Capital Territory
BPR&D	Bureau of Police Research and Development	NCW	National Commission for Women
CJPA	Criminal Justice and Police Accountability	NDTV	New Delhi Television Ltd.
CM	Chief Minister	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019	OxCGRT	Oxford Covid-19 Government Response Tracker
CSDS	Centre for the Study of Developing Societies	PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
DAN	Drone Acknowledgement Number	PRS	Institute for Policy Research Studies
DGCA	Directorate General of Civil Aviation	RPA	Remotely Piloted Aircraft
DMA	Disaster Management Act, 2005	RWA	Resident Welfare Association
DNT	Denotified Tribes	SC	Scheduled Castes
EDA	Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897	SOP	Standard operating procedure
FGD	Focused Group Discussion	SOS	Standard distress signal
FI	Field Investigator	SPIR	Status of Policing in India Report
FIR	First Information Report	SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
GPS	Global Positioning System	ST	Scheduled Tribes
IAE	Indian Association of Epidemiologists	The ANI	Asian News International
IAPSM	Indian Association of Preventive and Social Medicine	TN	Tamil Nadu
IPC	The Indian Penal Code	TV	Television
IPHA	Indian Public Health Association	US	The United States of America
MCA	Ministry of Civil Aviation	UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs	UIN	Unique Identification Number
MP	Madhya Pradesh	UP	Uttar Pradesh
NCR	Non-Cognizable Reports	UT	Union Territory
NCR	The National Capital Region	UV	Ultraviolet
		VLOS	Visual Line Of Sight
		WHO	World Health Organization

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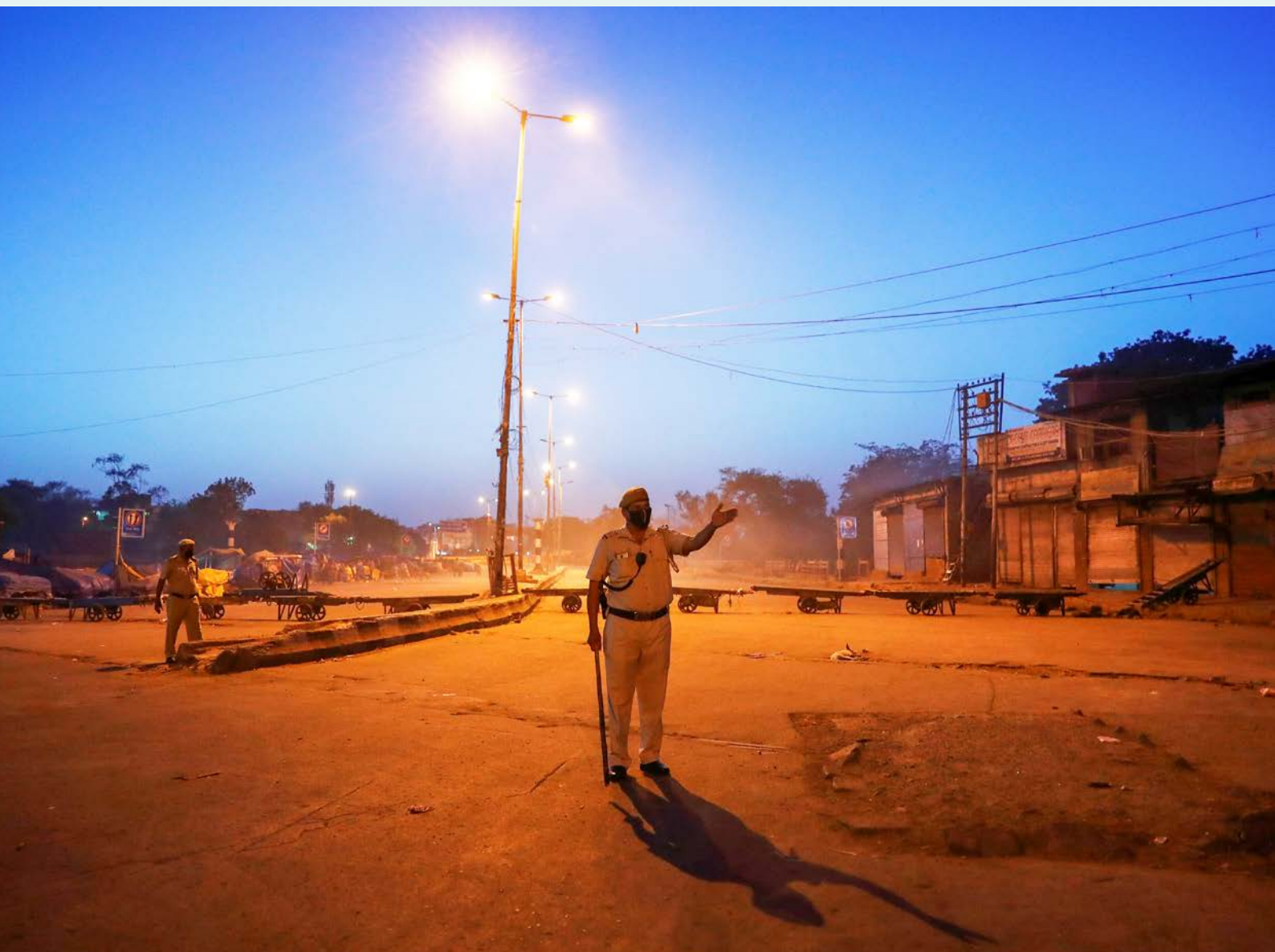
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Status of Policing in India Report 2020-2021, Volume II

Policing in the Covid-19 Pandemic: *The Context and Introduction*

A policeman asks residents to go inside their homes as handcarts are erected across a road as a blockade, during an extended nationwide lockdown in New Delhi, India, April 15, 2020. ©REUTERS/Adnan Abidi.

Policing in the Covid-19 Pandemic:

The Context and Introduction

This report is on facets of policing in India during Covid-19 pandemic. It covers a range of citizen-police interactions during the lockdown, the handling of the crisis, and the emergence of new challenges for the law enforcement apparatus. SPIR 2020-2021 Volume-I, released in April 2021, covered policing in regions affected by conflict, extremism, or insurgency. The two SPIR 2020-2021 volumes study policing during unusual and extraordinary circumstances.

The idea of the SPIR series is to provide fieldwork-based data and policy-oriented insights to improve the rule of law and justice delivery mechanism. The SPIR reports create baseline literature on policing in India and highlight the need gaps for policymakers and other stakeholders. The two volumes of SPIR 2020-2021 are in continuation of the earlier SPIRs which were focused on the citizens' trust and satisfaction with the police and their attitudes, adequacy, and working conditions.

All SPIR studies are in the public domain.

The fieldwork for the present volume was conducted in the middle of Covid-19 restrictions across 19 cities in 10 states (including the NCT of Delhi)¹. To undertake surveys in an atmosphere of lurking fear of an elusive virus was by itself a challenge. It was not easy to convince respondents to participate in face-to-face interviews. But eventually, a safer time window emerged towards the end of 2020 when we were able to conduct surveys without compromising on rigour or safety protocols.

Policing in the Times of Pandemic

Covid-19 pandemic is among the century's worst governance crises. It brought various levels of re-

strictions and lockdowns everywhere in the world and their execution fell upon the law enforcement agencies. Stories of negative public-police interactions were, therefore, only to be expected. It was felt that the pandemic exposed the underbelly of every society where the poor and the vulnerable were at the receiving end of the severity of the disease, its economic consequences, and the wrath of the police. By themselves, the police personnel were not the prime movers of the crisis management effort. Their task was to be strict with the violators of rapidly changing protocols.

In March 2020, when India imposed arguably the world's strictest lockdown, the police were expected to run the writ of the state in less than four hours. The enforcement of new protocols required their greater visibility and more frequent engagements with the public. The first nationwide lockdown was followed by many more extensions and continuations of region-specific restrictions. The surveys for this study were conducted in October and November 2020, immediately after the first wave of Covid-19 in India, following the first set of lockdowns.

The most abiding image of the first Indian lockdown in March 2020 was of streams of people passing through the empty highways in unbearable summer, often without food, water, or proper footwear. The lockdowns also triggered one of the world's worst reverse migrations of labour force from big cities to villages. In the absence of trains or buses, millions of migrants and their families trudged long distances, unable to survive in the cities without jobs or stable incomes. All this posed unique challenges for policing, which we have tried to capture in this report.

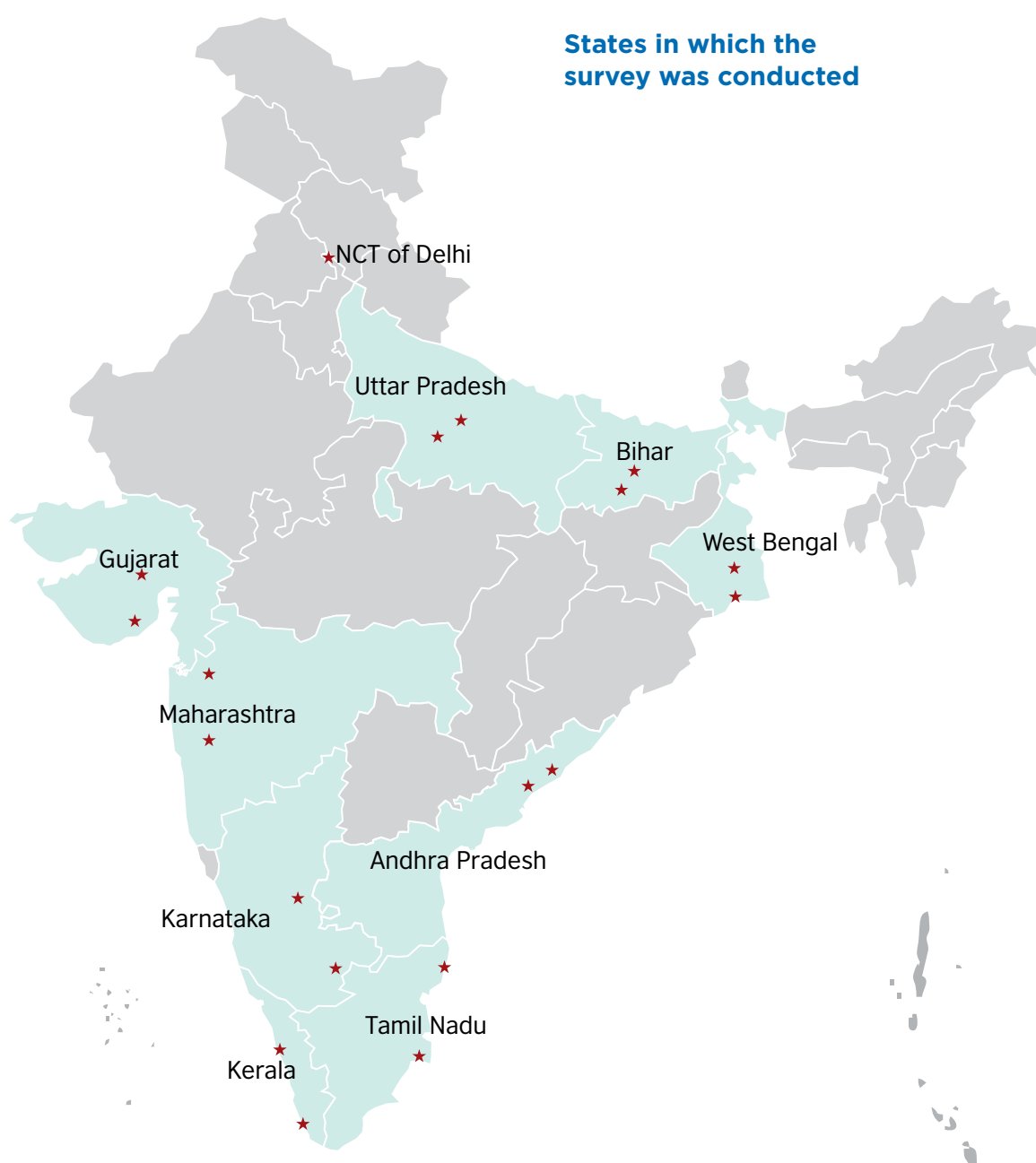
India invoked the Disaster Management Act 2005 ostensibly in the want of any other overarching le-

¹ Survey methodology and the list of states/cities etc. can be accessed in Annexure I Page 140–145

gal provision available centrally. With the Prime Minister being the Chairperson of the NDMA, the Act allowed the Central Government to issue directions to any authority across the country to ensure compliance in the public interest. Various state governments also invoked the Epidemic Diseases Act 1897, several other state-specific public health and emergency Acts and ordinances to exercise better control. Legal powers were also available under Sections 188, 269 and 270 of IPC which covered areas such as punishment for disobeying orders of any public servant and negligent or malignant acts committed with an intention to spread infection.

With the promulgation of extraordinary powers, the police were given a central role in the enforcement of rules and regulations which kept changing from time to time. Thrown into an unusual health emergency almost instantly, the personnel on the ground had no option but to follow orders. Very often, they went out of the way to help fellow human beings at grave personal risks but such gestures co-existed with unlawful detentions, on the spot punishments, and in some cases, use of excessive force in arbitrary and discriminatory ways.

While general crime (except crimes such as domestic abuse and cybercrime) declined around 60-90



per cent in many cities (The Federal, 2020), India's troublingly high count of custodial deaths remained virtually the same during the lockdown². The media splashed the custodial killings of 59-year-old shopkeeper J Jayaraj and his 31-year-old son Benicks Immanuel in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, in June 2020, for keeping their shop open beyond the lockdown hours. The victims were allegedly made to clean their own blood after their torture. But this was neither an exception nor the last such case. Just four days later, the police in the adjoining Tenkasi district tortured and killed an auto driver and four more individuals in the subsequent months. It is obvious that the lockdown did not change the core patterns and practices of policing.

It is out of the scope of this research to study the cops' generosity, loss of life, or abuse of power. (BPR&D has released a laudatory compilation of the good work done by the police and deaths of personnel on duty. A meticulous documentation of torture and custodial deaths is done by the National Campaign against Torture.) The present study gathers the opinions, perceptions, and experiences of citizens and police personnel about the impact of the pandemic on them and their families as also the treatments meted out to those found to be violating the prohibitions. The respondents praised the police personnel for their good work but also complained of their arrogance and cruelty. The paradox takes us back to a systemic absence of high expectations of the citizens and low levels of community participation in policing or in maintenance of law and order.

Study Design and a Summary of Main Findings

The main findings of the SPIR 2020-21 (Volume-II) have been organised mainly in five survey-based chapters. The surveys cover a range of themes and issues concerning changes in attitudes, interactions, performances, and working conditions of the police in the aftermath of the pandemic and the lockdown. There is an attempt to examine the responses and effectiveness of police personnel to their non-policing duties. The surveys explore if the rules of the lockdown applied to all sections of people equally and fairly, particularly the rich and the

poor. The report has two additional chapters that analyse the media coverage of policing-related issues and their handling of the migrant crisis.

The first chapter studies ways in which citizens and police personnel coped with the health crisis and if it left any physical or psychological effect on them or their families. It tracks the rising expectations from the police and its responses. The second chapter is on the police-public interface during the lockdown. Chapter three covers the management of crowds, the legality of actions, and the use of technology for surveillance and contact tracing. Chapter four looks at the working conditions of the police personnel deployed for Covid-19 related duty. The fifth chapter unravels the nature of restrictions imposed and the methods of awareness used by the police to communicate with the public.

The last two chapters, unlike the first five, are not based on the findings of the multi-state survey. Chapter six examines the media's representation of policing during the lockdown in two of India's highest circulation Hindi and English newspapers and their websites. The last chapter is a summary of the findings of an unpublished study by a group of researchers at Common Cause on the experiences of migrant and aid workers with the police. It was a separate, rapid survey conducted in a limited time and region to view the role of the police through the eyes of the migrant and relief workers.

A brief summary of the main takeaways of this report is as follows:

First, the lockdown put unduly high pressure on the poor and the vulnerable citizens. Their bleak circumstances forced them to go out to work, or to look for work, which made them prospective violators of the lockdown and prone to evictions as tenants. Compared to the rich who could use their resources or reserves (i.e. savings, salaries, pensions, housing, or ability to work from home, etc.), the poor and the vulnerable were more likely to be in situations of conflict with lockdown prohibitions or come in contact with the police for better or for worse.

Second, a two-third majority of police personnel said they were reporting for their daily coronavirus duties while mostly operating from their homes. This meant that a large number of police personnel were unable to isolate themselves from other family members who often included the old and infirm

² The official count of custodial deaths from April 2019 to March 2020 was 113 according to a government response to a Lok Sabha question (<http://164.100.24.220/loksabhaquestions/annex/174/AU292.pdf> Annexure A2). The number of custodial deaths in 2020 was 111 according to India Torture Report 2020 by UNCAT (<http://www.uncat.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/IndiaTortureReport2020.pdf>)

or those with serious co-morbidities. A glaring but underreported aspect of policing during the pandemic was its impact on the cops' mental health which affected almost all the respondents contacted.

Third, a majority of respondents saw the police mistreating people or using excessive force on them but almost the same proportion of people said they witnessed the police providing help to the civilians. Confrontations between the police and the civilians were common and the fear of the police was rampant with an overwhelming majority being fearful of being beaten up by the police. It was the poor and those belonging to the lower and working classes who felt threatened more often and were more fearful of the police violence. The police personnel were equally more likely to complain that the working class localities were less compliant with the lockdown protocols.

Fourth, the police personnel confirmed that it was common for them to use force against the migrant workers who were often stopped while crossing the state or district borders. The police also denied them shelters quite often due to various reasons. Significantly, a vast majority of respondents among citizens believed that giving a longer notice for the lockdown (instead of the abrupt 4-hour notice given by the Prime Minister on March 24, 2020) could have mitigated the migrant crisis.

Fifth, the police presence outdoors increased after the lockdown and their biggest challenge, by their own admission, was to manage people. Almost three-fourths of police personnel admitted that the citizens were put under increased surveillance. However, most police personnel were unable to follow legal procedures completely while maintaining law and order or while conducting investigations during the lockdown. The lockdown also resulted in a substantial decline in the incidence of crime though there was an increase in cybercrimes and cases of domestic violence.

Sixth, in spite of reports of excessive use of force, questionable arrests, and even custodial deaths in some parts of the country, the survey captures a largely positive public perception of the police during the pandemic. People were generally satisfied and felt secure with increased police presence and a majority believed that the lockdown rules applied equally to everyone. Conversely, it was the poor who felt threatened by the increased po-

lice presence and were more likely to disagree that the lockdown rules applied equally to everyone. Those dissatisfied believed that the police lacked a uniform or rational policy. About a quarter of all respondents felt that some people got away more easily with the lockdown rules.

Seventh, police personnel in the metros and tier-I cities were provided better facilities, logistics, and arrangements for personal safety such as training, hygiene, or transit accommodation than their counterparts in tier-II/III cities. In general, the Southern States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu fared better in providing their personnel with equipment and training when compared to states like Bihar and West Bengal. Police personnel across the states reported working long hours (11 to 15 hours) daily and a majority identified lack of staff as a major hurdle in doing their job effectively. The respondents also reported confusion at the policy level on the treatment meted out to migrant workers.

Eighth, the most common method of creating awareness about the pandemic was the use of loudspeakers by the police. Although they also used a variety of mediums like TV and social media, most people, particularly in tier-II/III cities, got their information through police loudspeakers. The method was useful at a time when physical movement was restricted and lockdown rules were changing frequently. People in the metros and tier-I cities were more likely to get their information through a variety of mediums including TV and social media platforms. Compared to tier-I cities, people in smaller towns and tier-II/III cities were more satisfied with the working of the police during the lockdown. However, people in tier-I cities were more likely to report that the police surveillance increased during the lockdown.

Ninth, the Indian media endorsed the official versions of things during the lockdown without asking too many questions. The media coverage was largely police-friendly and it often highlighted their struggles and good work under difficult circumstances. Corporal punishment for minor violations or other extralegal methods were mainly viewed as ways to discourage people from going out, ostensibly for their own good. The media readily passed on the messages and updates issued by the authorities to their audiences but it hardly raised questions about their mistreatment, use of extralegal methods, surveillance, random discretion, or lack of transparency in detentions.

Tenth, the police during the pandemic became the most visible face of the government. The lockdown expanded their role even further by assigning them a number of non-policing duties like checking the body temperature or health reports, distributing food, rations, and supplies, contact-tracing through the 'Arogya Setu' App, managing the contamination zones, and arranging shelters for the migrant workers, among others. People were fearful of the police, even victims of their assault and arrogance, while ironically sympathizing with them. It was felt that the other government agencies should have come forward to share the responsibility of the police in managing the pandemic.

Police Reforms: A Continuous Process

The present report is meant to be a snapshot of the role of the police during the Covid-19 pandemic. The findings of the study may not be dramatic or sensational but they bring out a slice of life from the daily routines of citizens and police personnel during an unusual health emergency. The surveys capture experiences of cops and common folks as recorded in October and November 2020 right after the first wave of the pandemic. Two things that stood out in the backdrop of the survey were an atmosphere of chaos and uncertainty and a lack of clarity about the additional roles and powers given to the police. While some of it was only to be expected in a crisis of this scale, the handling of the pandemic also uncovered the lack of train-

ing, SOPs, and general preparedness of the police in dealing with disasters. This may have been the reason for the police personnel relying on their discretion, rather than on norms and procedures, particularly while handing out instant punishments.

The SPIR 2020-21 (Volume-II) is part of the Police Reforms Initiative of Common Cause, an organisation dedicated to democratic interventions for probity in public life, rule of law and better governance. Working for an accountable and citizen-centric police force has always been an important part of this mission. We believe that the idea of police reforms should not be a one-time event. It should be treated as a systemic and steady process requiring constant training, sensitisation, and capacity-building to suit the needs of a diverse, democratic nation. We also need independent and policy-oriented research to measure deficits or developments to figure out how far we have come and where we are headed. The present study is a step in that direction.

We sincerely hope that the data presented in both volumes of SPIR 2020-21 will have a long shelf-life as instruments of rational policymaking. It will be a pleasure for our teams at Common Cause and CSDS to receive any feedback on this report.

Vipul Mudgal
Director, Common Cause

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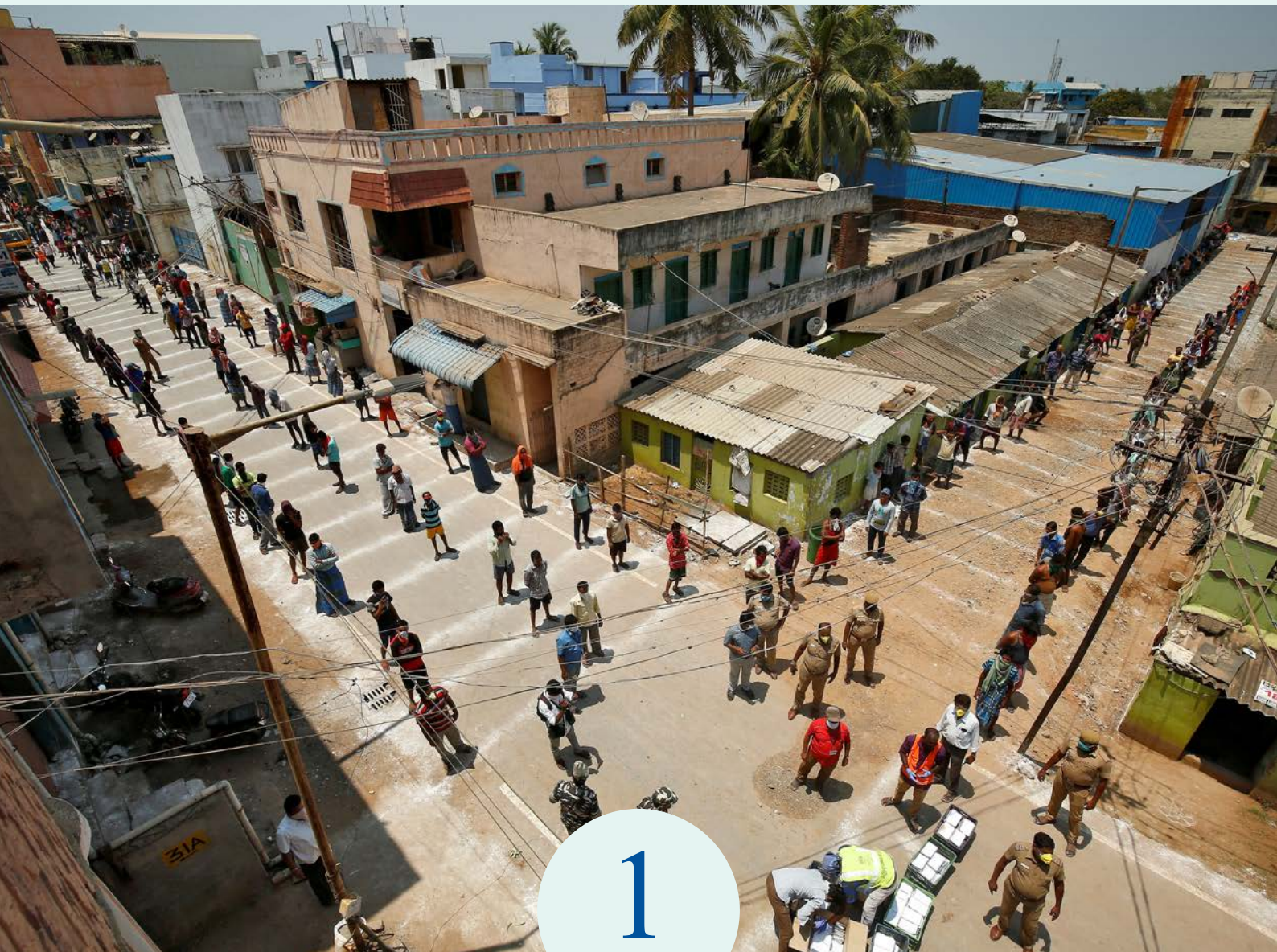
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Enforcing the Covid-19 Lockdown: *Effects and Experiences*

People stand on the lines drawn to maintain a safe distance as they wait to receive food during the first nationwide lockdown in Chennai, India, on April 1, 2020. ©REUTERS/P. Ravikumar.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The poorest and lower classes were more than twice as likely as the rich to face a lot of difficulties in accessing basic needs during the lockdown.
- A significant majority (58%) of the poor respondents reported facing the compulsion of going to work despite the lockdown, while among the rich, just a little over a quarter reported so.
- The poorest were also thrice as likely to report 'many' cases of forceful eviction of tenants during the lockdown, as compared to the rich. Amongst socio-religious groups, Dalits, Muslims and other minorities were most likely to be forcefully evicted during the lockdown.
- Covid-19 duty took a toll on the mental health of most of the police force, as nine in every 10 said that they were greatly or somewhat impacted by this.
- Despite the high infection rate among the police personnel, many of them were unable to isolate themselves from their families, which may include some vulnerable persons, i.e., persons with co-morbidities or those at risk. About two-thirds of the police personnel had to go back to their families every day after their work.
- An overwhelming majority of police personnel (79%) had downloaded the Arogya Setu app. However, only about half the police personnel reported the app as being helpful in tracing symptomatic persons and identifying containment or high-risk zones.

Enforcing the Covid-19 Lockdown: *Effects and Experiences*

On March 24, 2020, the Government of India announced a nationwide lockdown to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, asking people to remain at home for the next three weeks. It was one of the world's most stringent lockdowns, according to the University of Oxford Government Response Stringency Index, impacting the lives of more than 1.3 billion people (Hale, et al., 2021). This was followed by a few more lockdowns, with varied restrictions in place in different parts of the country. Since policymakers considered lockdowns as the primary measure to contain the spread of the contagion in the absence of a vaccine or pharmaceutical treatment, they were proactive about its enforcement. The responsibility of carrying out this task fell largely on the police, who ensured that the prohibitions, rules, and regulations, such as maintaining social distancing and wearing masks, were followed throughout India. As a result, the police emerged as the veritable face of the state. With every other government agency, courts and modes of transportation shutting down, the visibility of the police was amplified during the lockdown. As a public health crisis was viewed as a law-and-order situation, maintaining order was a top priority for the police. In addition, the police were discharging many non-policing duties, including contact tracing, manning check-points, providing security at high-risk zones like hospitals, quarantine centres and containment zones, as well as supply of essential commodities.

This chapter examines the general impact of the Covid-19 outbreak and the nationwide lockdown on the lives of people in light of the new role assumed by the police across India. It covers three distinct sections. The first section examines the impact of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of the civilians as well as police personnel and their families. It takes into account the psychological impact of long working hours and the hazardous nature of duties on the mental health of police personnel. The sec-

ond section explores the challenges of policing – managing a pandemic while enforcing medical safety protocols in an environment of chaos and uncertainty. The third and the last section sheds light on the opinions of police personnel and common people regarding the efficiency of the mobile application Aarogya Setu. The app was developed by the Government of India to connect health services with those in need and for contact tracing etc., in order to contain the spread of the infection. It further highlights the opinions of the police force on the steps taken by some of the state governments for decongesting prisons, spike in the arrests of protestors, and action taken against lockdown violators, including arrests. The chapter investigates the myriad ways in which the regular citizens, police and some other institutions coped with various dimensions of the public health catastrophe.

Spread of Covid-19 and the lockdown

Since the first infections were reported in Wuhan, China, late last year, Covid-19 has brought the world on the brink of an economic and health disaster. The first case in India was detected in late January 2020 in a middle-class medical student who had flown home from Wuhan. Only those Indians with international travel histories were tested in the early weeks (Bengali et al., 2020). But life in general remained normal with millions of India's urban service class—house maids, chauffeurs, and others—going about their lives routinely through public transport and crowded neighborhoods. In mid-March one of the first reported cases among poor people was of a 68-year-old housekeeper in Mumbai. Doctors said she was, in all likelihood, infected by her employer, who had tested positive after returning from the U.S.

As the infections continued to soar after the lockdown, which was announced by the Prime Minister in the fourth week of March 2020, it was also argued, among other

Note: The study was conducted during the months of October and November in 2020, and therefore, it is confined to the first wave of the Covid-19 and the first phase of the consequential lockdown(s) that were imposed in 2020.

things, that closing international airports earlier could have been more effective (Bengali et al., 2020). Clearly, not everyone championed a complete shutdown of the country. In August 2020, eminent public health experts as well as epidemiologists advocated for discontinuation of lockdowns. They recommended the imposition of only “cluster” restrictions of short defined duration. Analysing the prevailing situation, they rooted for a “public health approach” for controlling the novel coronavirus pandemic, stressing that it is not a law-and-order problem. In addition, they advised dealing with the health catastrophe with empathy and meaningful community engagement (IPHA, IAPSM and IAE, 2020).

In the subsequent weeks, the spread of Covid-19 in specific localities was becoming more noticeable despite the continued lockdown phases. The spread of the pandemic through human contact and its concentration in different localities depended on a range of factors. The present study also examines the nature of the economic divide across respondents. It assesses how individuals directly came across infected persons, as well as the impact of the virus in different physical locations and economic classes.

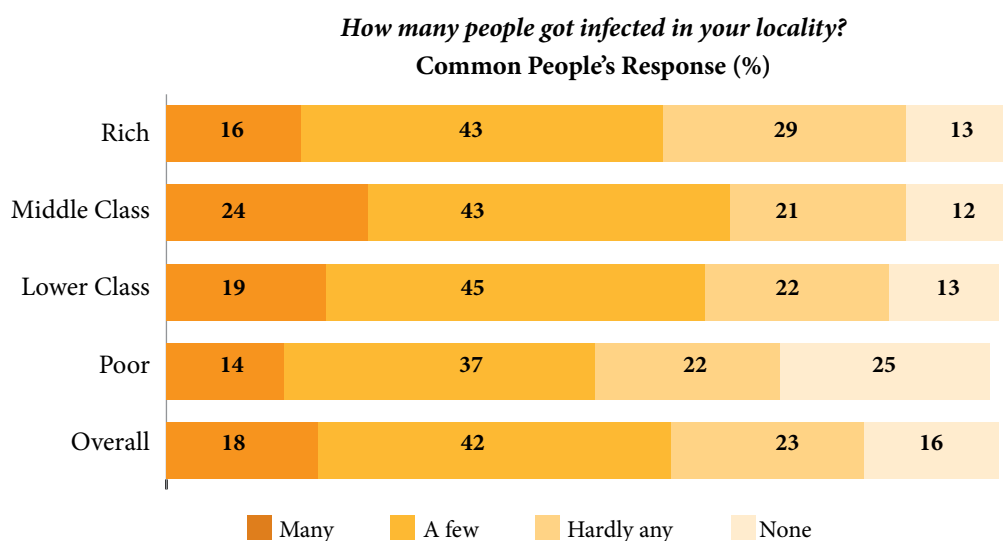
Although initially considered as a virus brought to the country by the upper and middle-classes, or those who had the means to travel abroad (and thus carrying the infection back with them), Covid-19 inevitably spread across all classes and regions of the country. In response to the question on how many people got infected with coronavirus in your locality, overall, around one in every five (18%)

people reported many infections in their locality, while around two in every five (42%) observed a few infections (Figure 1.1).

When the results are cut across the class category, the survey revealed that the prevalence of the virus among the middle class is significantly higher; close to one-fourth (24%) reported many such cases. In all other classes, less than one-fifth people reported having ‘many’ such cases. In the category of ‘fewer infections’, the poor reported a lower percentage as compared to the other economic groups (Figure 1.1). However, this data needs to be read with a caveat—this cannot be used to determine the *actual* prevalence of the infection in any class or locality, but only suggests *people’s perception* of the spread of the virus in that locality. The perception can conflict with the reality due to several possible factors—lack of awareness about the actual prevalence, fear of reporting as increased restrictions are imposed as a result of reporting and the inability to seek medical help and identify the infection, to name a few. For instance, while the data here suggests that the poorest are least likely to report Covid-19 in their localities, an alternate analysis of government data from 2020 reveals slums in Mumbai are more vulnerable to the Covid-19 pandemic (Patranabis et al., 2020).

Similarly, the poorest respondents and those from Tier-I cities are least likely to have come across someone who was infected with Covid-19, even though Tier I cities have a higher prevalence of the infection than Tier II/III cities, particularly during the first wave (Vikram, 2020).

Figure 1.1 | Middle-class reported most cases of infection during the first wave of the pandemic



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: In last few months, many people got infected with coronavirus. How many people got infected in your locality – many, a few, hardly any, or no one?

Among the overall respondents, two in every five have reported coming across an infected person while three in every five had no such encounter. As seen here, two in every five residing in Tier II or III cities had come across someone infected with Covid-19, as compared to one in every three in Tier I cities. Across classes, it is the poor who have personally encountered the least number of infected people as only about one in every three (29%) have had such encounters. But nearly half the people belonging to the other economic classes have come across infected persons. This could be owing to the lack of awareness among the poorer sections about Covid-19 symptoms and the failure to detect them in an acquaintance (Figure 1.2).

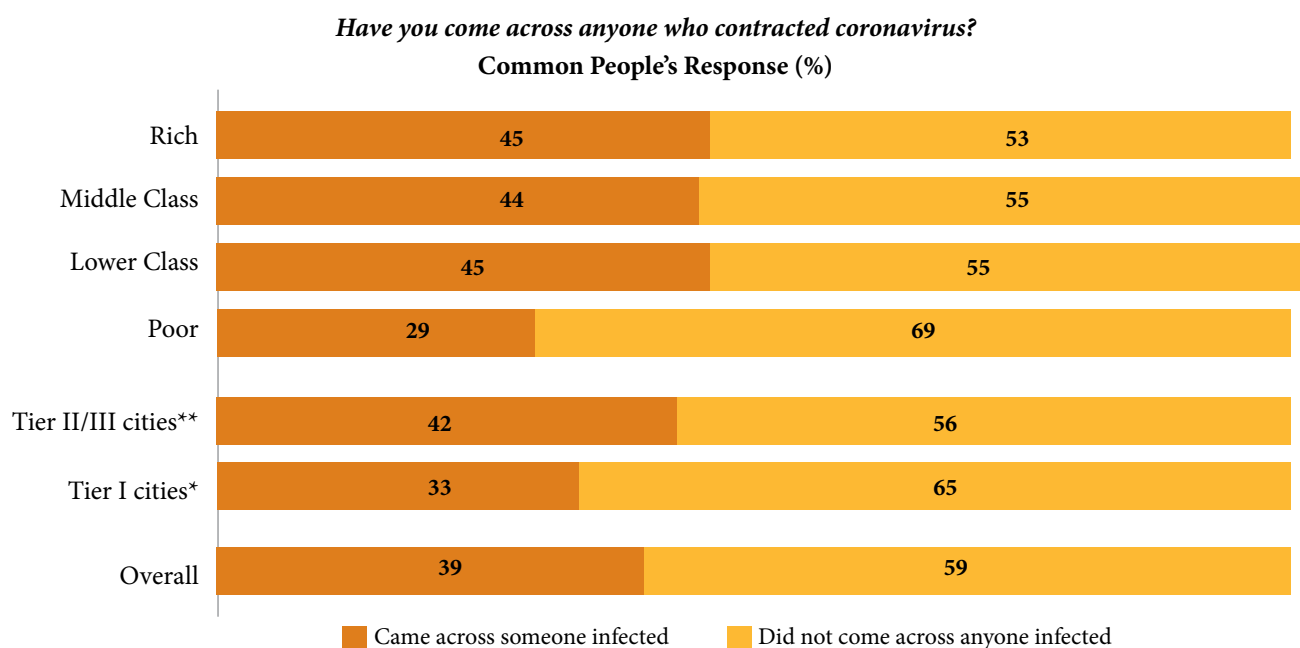
Greater impact of the lockdown on the poor and marginalised

There is a good reason why the class divide between the rich and poor widened during the lockdown. When the lockdown was announced ostensibly without adequate time to prepare, a large number of daily-wage labourers and others wanted to return to their villages. They were willing to walk hundreds of kilometres as no transport was available. Eventually, the government did make some arrangements for buses to send them home. At some places, a large number of migrant workers were chased away by the police with *lathis*, on the instructions of their superi-

ors. The government seemed to go out of its way to help the middle and upper classes, providing all possible help to bring them back home as the lockdown persisted. However, it appeared to have looked the other way when the poor sought similar aid. Although it offered food to the stranded migrants, many of them still wanted to return home as transport was grounded and commercial activities came to a complete halt. Had the government given the migrant workers sufficient notice before announcing the lockdown curbs, they would have gone home on their own, and saved the government a lot of trouble and expenses (Kumar, 2020). This sentiment is also expressed by a majority of the common people interviewed in this survey (see Chapter 2) and by the migrant and aid workers surveyed in the rapid study by Common Cause, as seen in Chapter 7 of this report.

Since the lockdown was completely unexpected and issued without an adequate warning period, the survey ascertains the varying levels of difficulty faced by people in accessing basic essentials. Financial resources dried up for those employed in daily wage work in the unorganised sector and belonging to marginalised socio-economic groups. Financial hardships also knocked on the doors of the relatively less vulnerable categories, such as the middle class, among others.

Figure 1.2 | Poor and those living in Tier I cities less likely to come across infected persons



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

*Tier I cities in the sample: Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Pune.

**Tier II and III cities in the sample: Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, Patna, Muzaffarpur, Surat, Bellary, Thiruvananthapuram, Malappuram, Nashik, Thiruvallur, Lucknow, Kanpur Nagar, North 24 Parganas.

Questions asked: Have you come across anyone who contracted coronavirus?

The unanticipated nature of the lockdown impacted the common man's ability to access daily essentials. Despite exempting essential and medical stores from the purview of the lockdown, access was visibly more difficult than in normal times. As discussed above, the difficulties were disproportionately higher among the lower classes and the poorest of the populations. This is confirmed by the survey data as seen in the above table. The poorest and lower classes are more than twice as likely than the rich to report facing a lot of difficulties in accessing basic amenities during the lockdown. When we club the categories of 'very difficult' and 'somewhat difficult' together, we find that about 70 percent of the poorest and lower categories faced difficulties in accessing essentials, while the corresponding figure for the rich was 47 percent. Conversely, as one moves from the poor to the wealthy, respondents are more likely to report that they faced no difficulty at all (18% for poor and 30% among rich) (*Figure 1.3*).

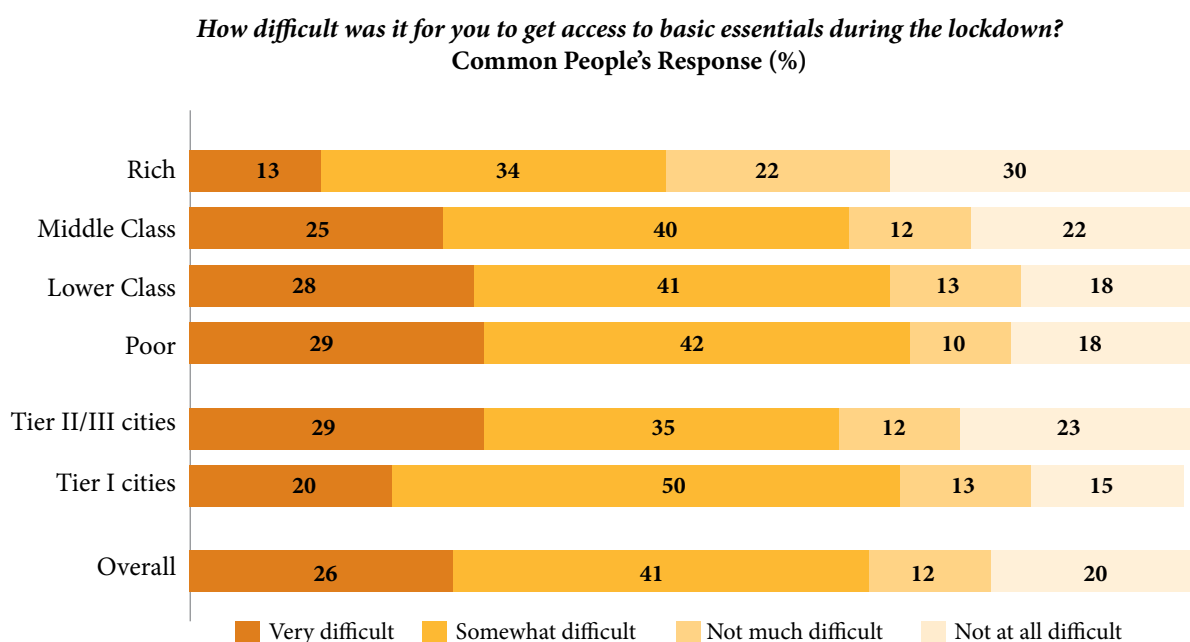
Overall, access to essential commodities was found to be very difficult among a little over one-fourth of the respondents (26%). For forty-one percent of the respondents, accessing basic needs was somewhat difficult while the rest (32%) did not face much or any difficulty. It is common for bigger cities to have more outlets for all kinds of facilities and this remained the norm. However, nearly one out of three respondents (29%) in Tier II and III cities found it very difficult to access essential supplies during the lockdown. On the other hand, about twenty percent people

in Tier I cities faced the same. Yet, there is an interesting paradox in Tier II/III cities. While more respondents from these cities said that they found it very difficult to access basic needs, a higher percentage in these smaller cities also felt that they faced no difficulty in accessing these services, as compared to Tier I cities (23% in Tier II and III cities, and 15% in Tier I cities). Thus, the responses in Tier II/III cities were more polarised at two extreme ends of the spectrum (*Figure 1.3*).

Taking the state-wise analysis into account, respondents from Kerala and Maharashtra (where the initial surge of Covid-19 cases began) were probably more prepared since they reported better access to essential items during the lockdown. Almost two out of three people, or 63 percent in Kerala and nearly half (47%) in Maharashtra reported facing no hurdles at all in procuring essential supplies. This is in contrast to states where Covid-19 began spreading a little later. Karnataka saw half of its respondents (52%) finding it very difficult to procure basic needs followed by Gujarat (43%) and Bihar (41%).

The economic constraints of the lockdown were predictably the harshest on the poorest classes of the society — those employed in daily wage or casual/informal work. It is thus unsurprising that the poorest were also the ones most likely to be compelled to go to work during the lockdown due to financial difficulties, as seen in Figure 1.4. While a significant majority of the poorest respondents reported

Figure 1.3 | Accessing basic essentials during lockdown was most difficult for the poor



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: In many regions, local people found it difficult to get access to basic essentials like food or medicines, during lockdown. How difficult was it for you and your family to get access to the basic essentials – very, somewhat, not much, or not at all?

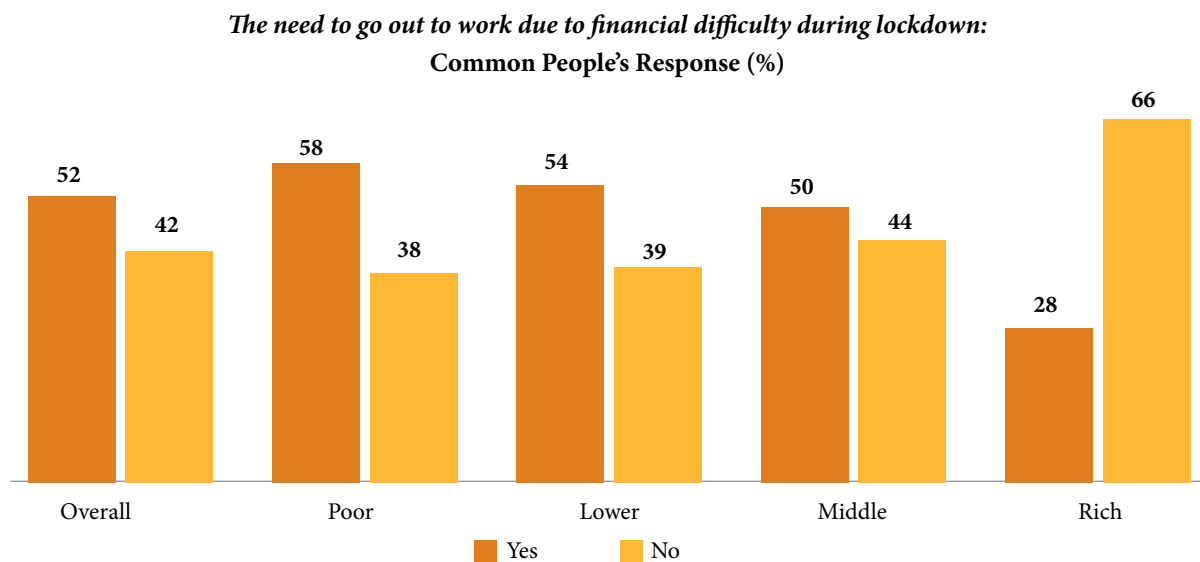
having to go to work (58%), just a little over a quarter of the rich respondents (28%) had such compulsions (*Figure 1.4*).

Overall, a little more than half of the respondents were compelled to go to work to combat financial constraints that would have come their way if they stopped working. However, two in every five did not need to do so.

In India, literacy levels, class and caste often go hand in hand. However, a person's educational qualification and

his/her ability to continue earning a regular income became further intertwined during the lockdown. That is because 'work from home' became a norm during the lockdown. Not surprisingly, this option was rarely available to the lesser educated, poor people engaged in more manual labour jobs. Thus, the less literate respondents were more likely to be compelled to go to work while the higher educated were less likely to face the same situation (*Figure 1.5*).

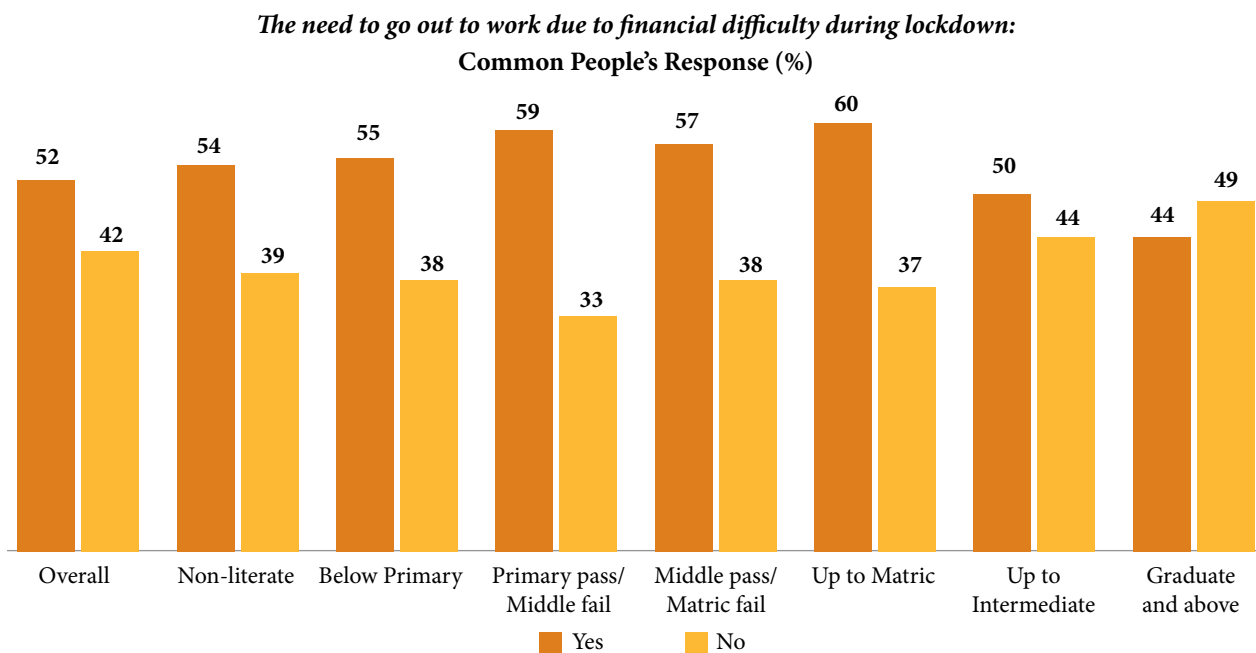
Figure 1.4 | Poor more likely to be compelled by financial constraints to go to work during lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: While lockdown was in place, did you need to go out to work due to financial difficulty?

Figure 1.5 | Non-literates and less educated more likely to be required to go to work during lockdown, compared to those with higher education



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: While lockdown was in place, did you need to go out to work due to financial difficulty?

Response of Resident Welfare Associations in lockdown

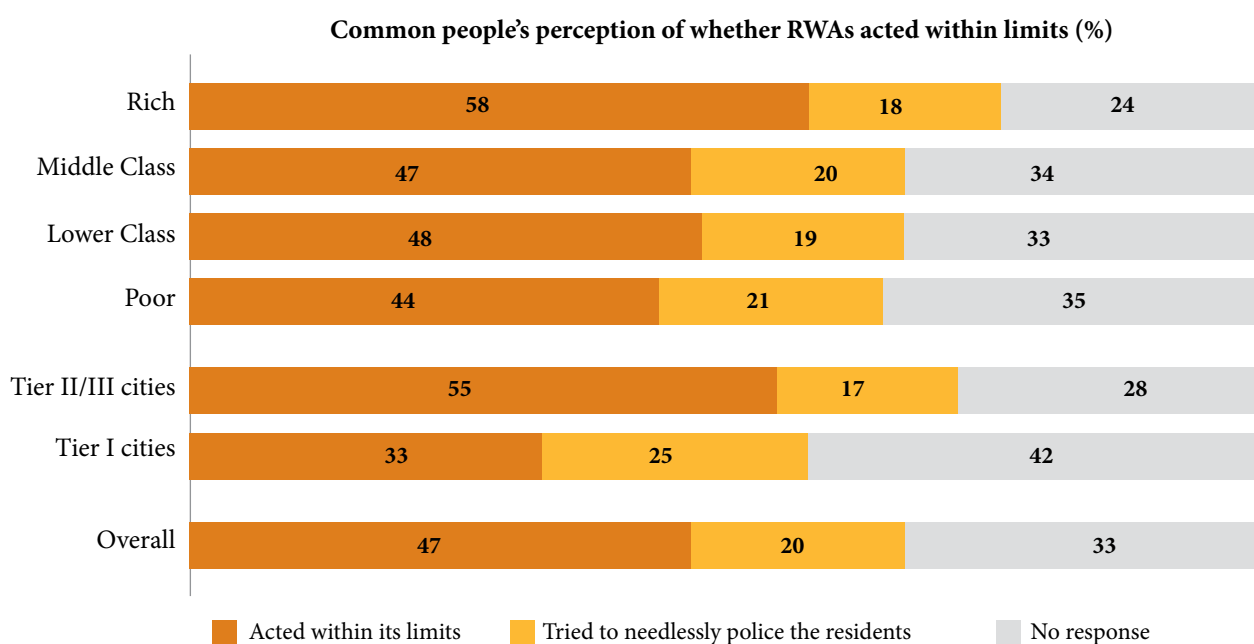
Curbing the Covid-19 spread was a key task for many organisations and associations. An important role of the Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) was to maintain order in their respective housing societies. In order to curb the easy spread of the contagion across apartments and avoid being classified as a containment zone, the RWAs embarked on many measures, such as closing gyms, clubs, and the like. However, some RWAs also took certain extreme measures, many of which were met with some disagreement. Some people – like health workers on active frontline duty – were considered a risk by these RWAs. People also had differing views on whether the RWAs were dictatorial and biased. Additionally, evictions of tenants due to their inability to pay rent or for other issues were also frequently reported in the media. It must also be stressed that there were instances of landlords and RWAs showing leniency in such difficult times in the form of rent concessions and acceptance of delayed payments.

The rules and regulations of the RWAs became more rigid as the infection rate shot up. These restrictions were implemented in the belief that they will not compromise the safety of the residents. However, the steps taken by the RWAs in this regard are controversial, with some arguing that these associations were needlessly policing the residents. This is a crucial debate that the study weighs in on.

Nearly half of the respondents (47%) felt that the restrictions were within limits while one in every five felt that the RWAs were crossing their limits and policing the residents. Nearly one-third respondents did not offer an answer to the question. In Tier I cities, two of every five respondents preferred to remain silent on the question while close to one of every three were non-committal in Tier II/III cities. In the big cities, one-fourth of the respondents felt that RWA regulations amounted to policing of residents unnecessarily whereas close to one-fifth (17%) felt the same in other cities. A significant majority of the rich people (58%) felt that the RWAs acted within limits while around half of the lower and middle classes agreed with this. However, this decreased to about 44 percent when it came to the poor. Less than half of the poor felt that there were no confrontations between the RWA members and residents and this feeling of assurance increased as the economic status of the respondents improved. Around one in five of all classes believed that the RWAs were unnecessarily policing the residents by implementing more stringent lockdown restrictions. One-fourth of the rich respondents and over three of every 10 (30 to 40 %) respondents from other classes remained silent on the matter (*Figure 1.6*).

In the state-wise analysis, another instance of Karnataka facing one of the most difficult lockdowns is observed. In Karnataka nearly half (46%) of the respondents reported that RWAs crossed their limits and needlessly policed the

Figure 1.6 | One in five people believe that RWAs tried to needlessly police the residents



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: While some feel that during lockdown, the RWAs acted within their limits, there are some others who think they went outside their limited authority and were trying to needlessly police the residents. In your experience, did the RWA of your locality function within its limit, or did they try to needlessly police the residents?

residents. This was followed by Uttar Pradesh where nearly one third (30%) felt the same.

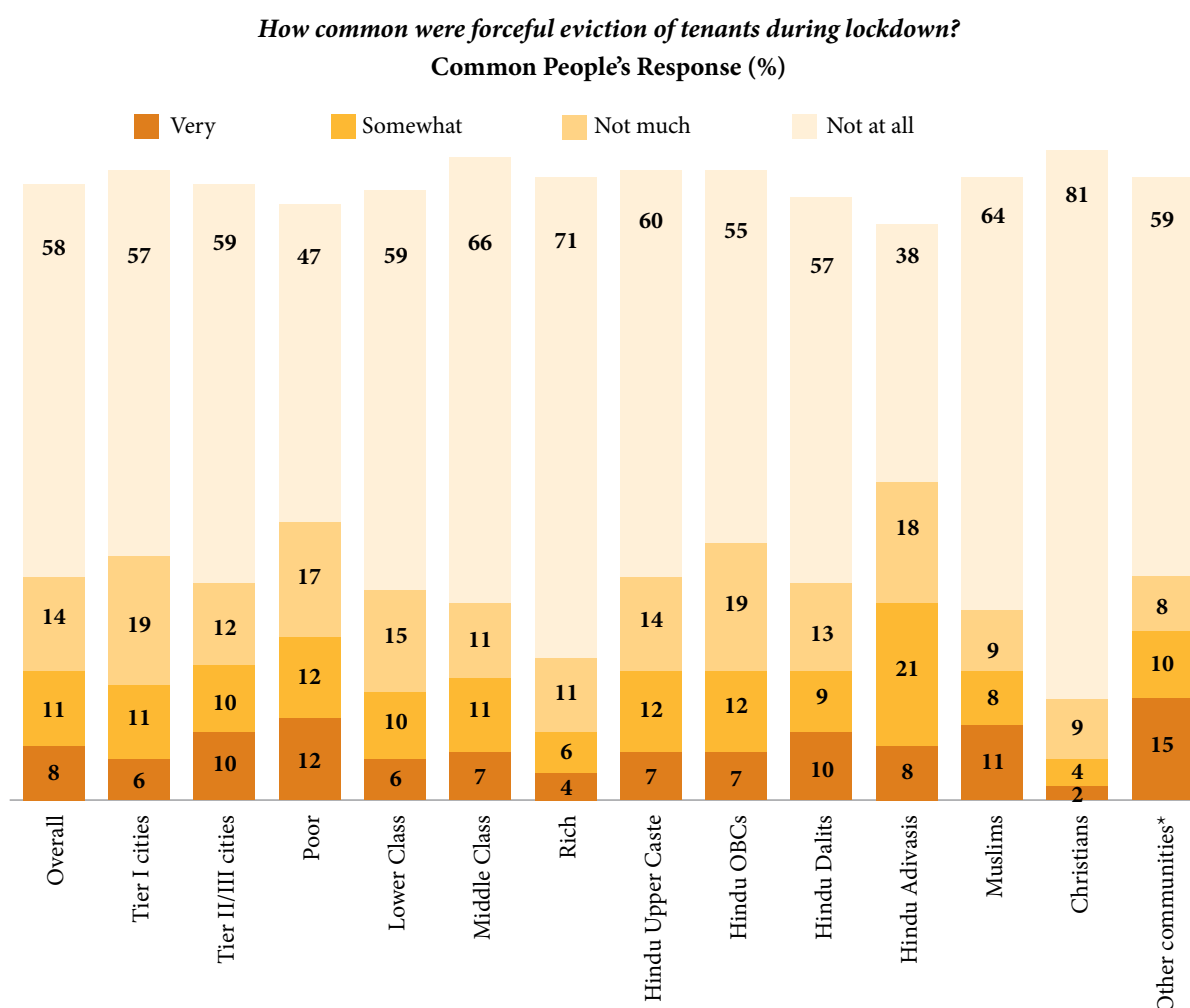
The economic crisis and sudden stalling of many economic activities during the lockdown had a cascading effect on some people's basic requirements, food and shelter. The most precariously positioned in the society predictably had the worst experience when it came to the access to basic facilities, such as being allowed to forgo or delay the payment of rent because of the lockdown. While the government urged landlords to be considerate during these circumstances, it did not necessarily translate into action for several people, particularly the poor, marginalised castes or religious minorities. As is evident from *Figure 1.7*, 12 percent of the poor, 10 percent Dalits and 11 percent Muslims said that it was very common for the tenants to be forcefully evicted from their homes during the lockdown. In comparison, only four percent of the rich and seven percent Hindu upper castes believed this to be true. The

poorest are thrice as likely to report many cases of forceful eviction of tenants during the lockdown, as compared to the rich.

On combining the categories 'very common' and 'somewhat common', a similar trend appears, with 29 percent of the Adivasis reporting that cases of forceful eviction were common and 24 percent of the poor reporting so. This percentage reduces as one goes up the economic scale and only one-tenth (10%) of the rich respondents take this stand.

Overall, nearly three in every five respondents (58%) believed that there had been no evictions as far as they knew. One out of five (19%) respondents felt that evictions had somewhat or greatly increased during lockdown. In Tier II and III cities, 10 percent respondents believed that evictions were commonplace while a much lower percentage (6%) was of this view in Tier I cities.

Figure 1.7 | Poor, Dalits, Muslims and other minority groups most likely to report that eviction of tenants during the lockdown was very common



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

*Other communities include other religious minorities such as Sikh, Buddhists/Neo Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and those who did not reveal their caste. They have all been clubbed together because of miniscule cases.

Questions asked: During the Covid-19 outbreak/lockdown, how common were the forceful eviction of tenants by landlords?

Lockdown duty amidst Covid-19: Fear among police personnel

The fear of Covid-19 was palpable across all sections of the society but frontline workers tasked to control the Covid-19 spread were faced with the more immediate danger of being infected. As a result, apprehensions on how to work in the new environment with pandemic protocols continued to rise. Some major concerns of the personnel deployed on Covid-19 duty during lockdown were getting infected, spreading the infection to their families and others and experiencing negative impact on their mental health while discharging their duty in such pressing situations. As a result, it was also significant to know how many were willing to take leaves during the lockdown if such an option was provided.

The fear of the virus was not just prominent among ordinary citizens and health personnel but also among police personnel. A majority of the police personnel (53%) interviewed were very fearful of getting infected. Around one out of three (31%) were somewhat worried about contracting Covid-19. Only one-sixth (16%) reported having very little or no fear in this regard (Figure 1.8).

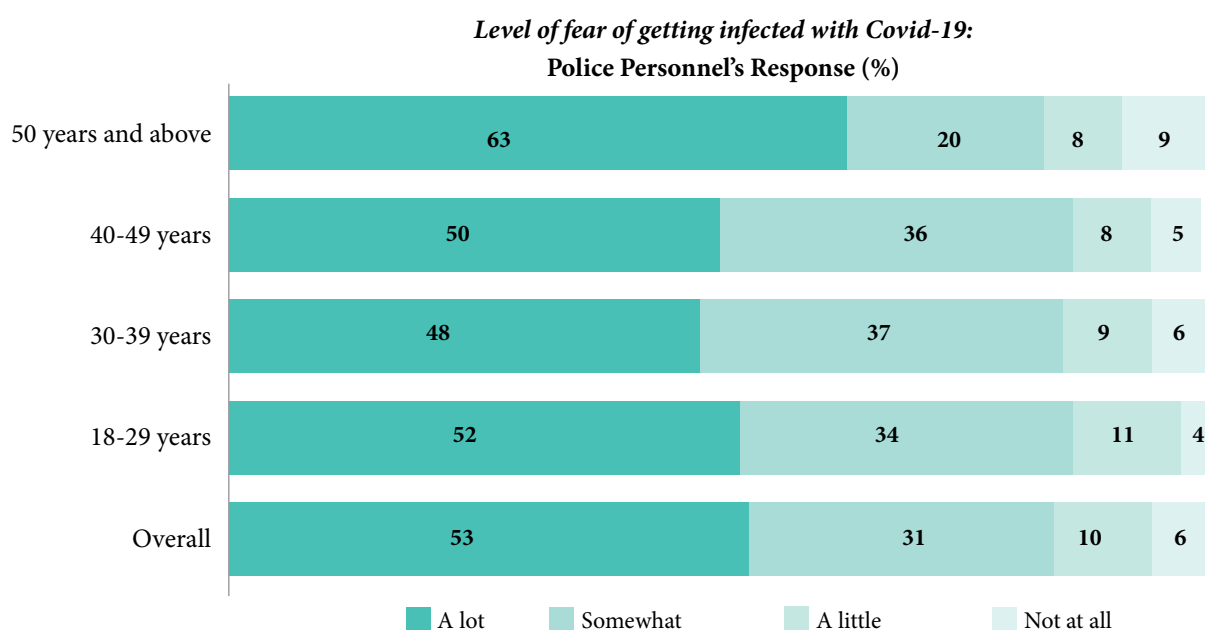
Numerous medical studies about the new virus have revealed that the older population and those with already existing co-morbidities are more vulnerable to the severe effects of Covid-19, including death. The early stage of the disease, traced to Wuhan in China, was elaborated in a

study by *The Lancet*. The data shows that the case fatality ratio increases substantially with age (Verity, et al., 2020). Naturally, the anxiety of getting infected on duty during lockdown was somewhat more prevalent among police personnel who were 50 years or older, as a vast majority (63%) in that category expressed a lot of fear. Among the other age groups, around half were very fearful of getting infected. One in five among the oldest age group were somewhat scared and a little more than one-third of the other age groups were somewhat fearful of the contagion. Even the prevalence of fear among relatively younger age groups may be attributed to a lot of unknowns about the virus. Since Covid-19 was completely new and its transmission methods were mysterious in the early stages, it sparked widespread fear and suspicion among police personnel of all ages (Figure 1.8).

One-third of the police personnel did not have to go back to their families every day after their work. However, about two-third (68%) had to return home (Figure 1.9). This figure is particularly troubling because of the high infection rate among the police personnel themselves, being frontline workers. The inability to isolate themselves from the families, which may include sick, aged or other vulnerable people, posed a health risk not only for the personnel themselves but also for their families.

However, police personnel reported taking various preventive measures to control the possible spread. For nearly all

Figure 1.8 | One out of two police personnel very fearful of getting infected by Covid-19



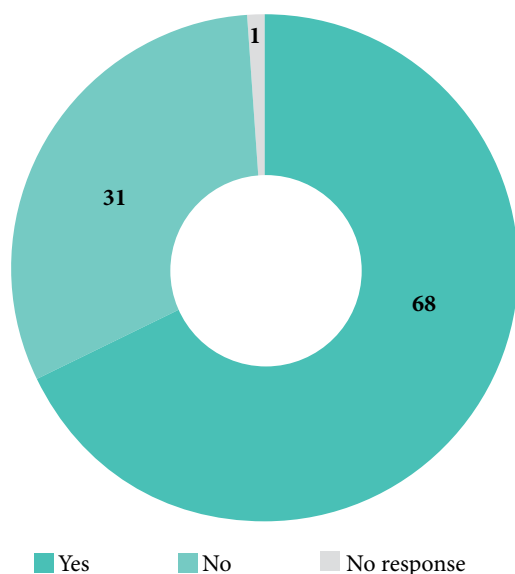
Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: Coronavirus is highly contagious. Considering the nature of your job, how much did you fear of catching the virus while on duty during the lockdown – a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?

(98 percent) police personnel it was possible to wash or sanitise themselves before entering home after work. Nearly all (90%) were also able to wash their clothes separately from the rest of the household members. Three-fourth of the police personnel (77%) found it possible to maintain physical distance from family members after return-

Figure 1.9 | Two out of three personnel went back to their families daily after finishing their duty during the outbreak

During the Covid-19 outbreak, after finishing with your duty hours, did you have to go back to your family every day? Police Personnel's Response (%)



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: During the Covid-19 outbreak, after finishing with your duty hours, did you have to go back to your family every day?

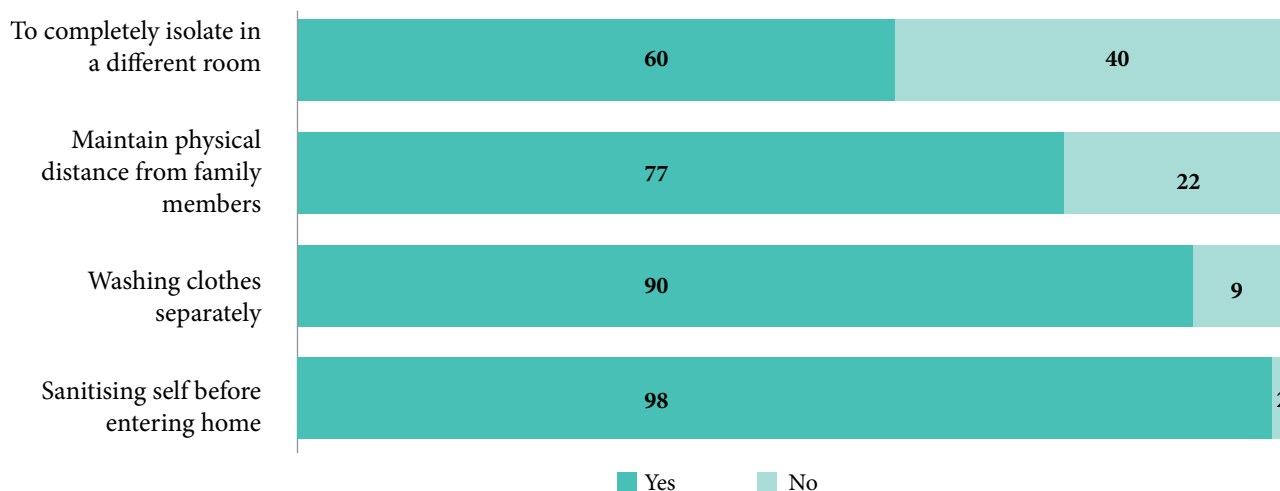
ing from Covid-19 duty. Three out of five were also able to completely isolate themselves in a different room after duty to protect family members from possible transmission (Figure 1.10).

The occupational hazard of regular Covid-19 duty took a toll on the mental health of most of the police force. Nine in every 10 said that they were greatly impacted or somewhat impacted (87%) by this. A majority of the police personnel in the Tier II and III cities felt that there was a lot of impact on their mental health. Close to a half (49%) in Tier I cities felt that their mental health was somewhat impacted. The less experienced police personnel (with less than five years in the force) were likely to feel more impact on their mental health as compared to their seniors. Half of the police personnel who were poor felt that their mental health was greatly impacted under the pressures of the lockdown duties (Figure 1.11).

With the unanticipated scale of the spread of the virus, frontline workers were left with little choice when it came to being present on duty during the lockdown. The already understaffed police forces across the states were presumably fully exhausted owing to the imposition and implementation of the national lockdown. Thus, several states did not allow the police personnel to take leave during this period, such as Gujarat (Business Standard, 2020). In Delhi, even showing proof of a personnel coming in contact with a Covid-19 positive patient was not enough to be granted leave (Trivedi, 2020).

Figure 1.10 | Two out of five personnel could not to isolate themselves from their families upon returning home from their duty

While going back to the family members, was the following possible? Police Personnel's Response (%)

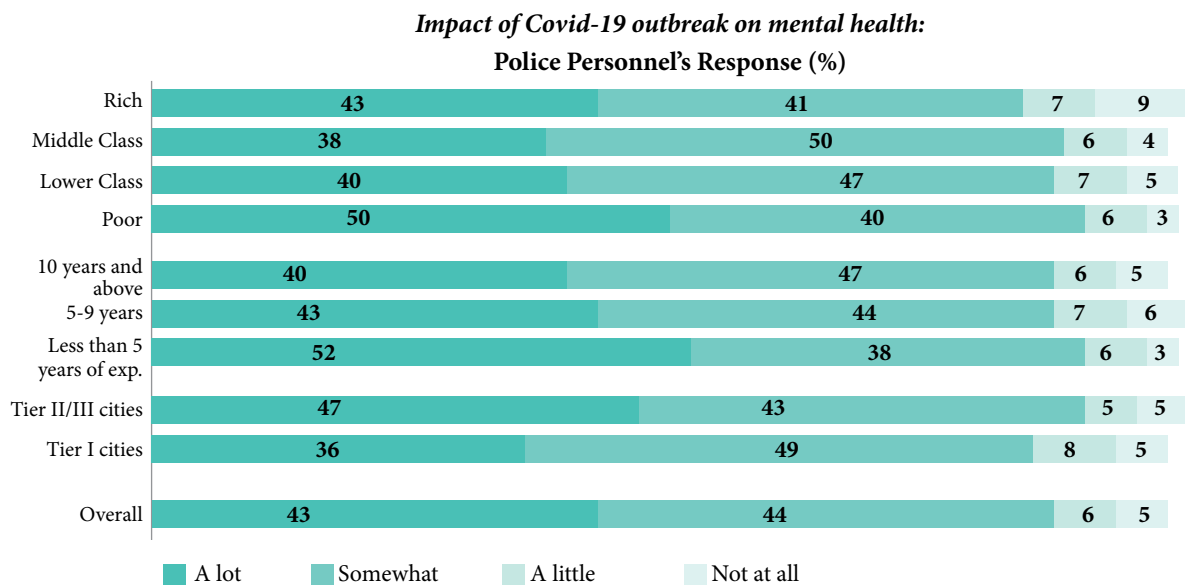


Question asked: (Follow up questions to those returning to their family after duty) While going back to your family after finishing your duty hours, was it possible for you-a. washing or sanitising yourself before entering home? b. washing your clothes separately; c. maintaining physical distance with all the family members; d. staying in complete isolation in a different room?

Thus, police personnel were asked whether they would have taken leave during the lockdown, if given a choice. The extent of fear of the unknown virus was such that across all class categories in all cities, two out of five police personnel were willing to take leave if such a choice was offered. The fear of the virus seemed to be a little more widespread among police personnel in Tier I cities as com-

pared to Tier II/III cities (45% and 42% respectively). As police personnel moved up the economic ladder, there was a greater likelihood of them saying that they would prefer to take leave if they had the choice (from a little more than a quarter among the poor to half among the rich) (Figure 1.12).

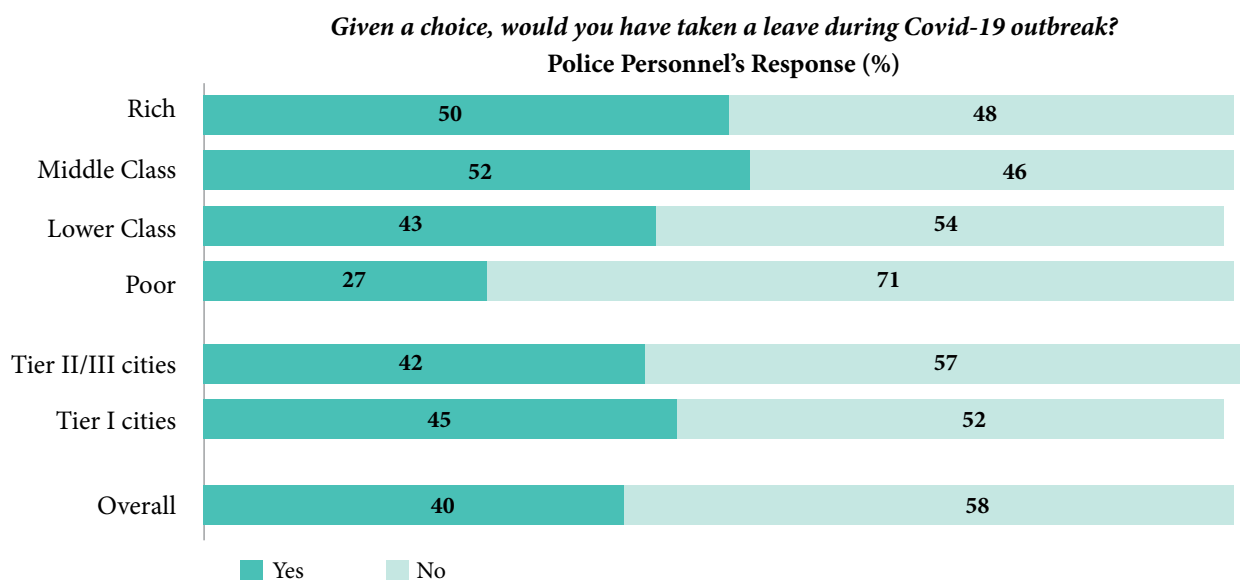
Figure 1.11 | Two out of five personnel reported a lot of impact of the coronavirus outbreak on their mental health



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: How much do you think being on regular duty during coronavirus outbreak has impacted the mental health of the police personnel like you – a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?

Figure 1.12 | Two out of five personnel would have preferred to take a leave during the Covid-19 outbreak



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: If given a choice, would have taken a leave and stayed at home during coronavirus outbreak for your own safety?

Controlling the Covid-19 situation

The post lockdown scenario was tense as everyone from the common people to the police personnel was supposed to adhere to lockdown protocols. Billed as ‘frontline warriors’ in India’s war against a global health emergency, the police has had to walk the tightrope between law-and-order maintenance duties and service-oriented roles. Along with preventing unauthorised movement and taking punitive action against lockdown violators, they supplied groceries to people in containment zones and arranged for food and transport for migrant labourers walking back to their homes. Even though Section 144 provided support to the police personnel, the prolonged lockdown across India threw up multiple challenges, prompting them to go beyond the call of duty for a sustained period.

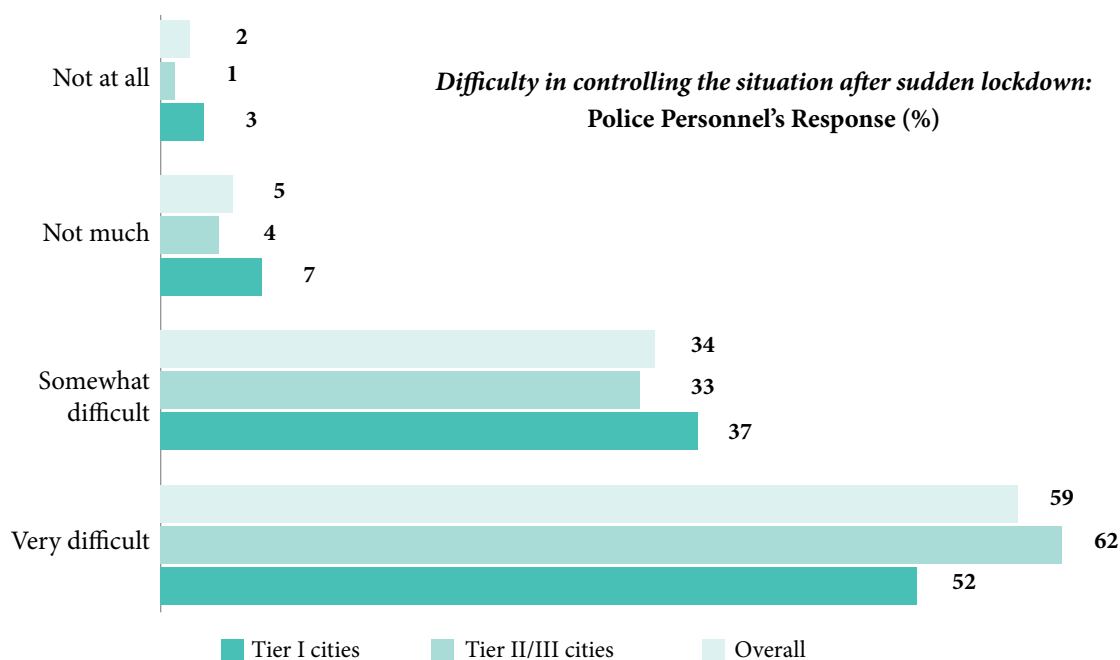
The opinions of police personnel regarding their taxing pandemic-related responsibilities have been taken into account in this study. Their views and suggestions on decongesting prisons for those facing less offensive criminal charges and providing relief to some people facing arrest were also considered. These steps have the potential to reduce their workload in prison duty, prevent transmission in congested areas and provide relief to the people facing arrest for lesser offences.

The difficulties faced by the police force were clearly high. A significant majority (59%) of the police personnel stated

that they found it very difficult to enforce the suddenly announced countrywide lockdown. One-third (34%) found the situation to be somewhat difficult to control. Half of the police personnel in Tier I cities found controlling this situation to be very difficult. This proportion rose to three in every five (62%) in Tier II and III cities. One-third of those in Tier II and III cities considered this new form of duty to be somewhat difficult and close to two in five (37%) in Tier I cities had the same view (*Figure 1.13*).

As early as March 2020, before the lockdown was imposed, the Supreme Court had directed states to consider decongesting the prisons in view of the Covid-19 outbreak (*Business Today*, 2020). Yet, police personnel majorly had contrarian opinions. More than half of the police personnel (56%) opposed the idea of decongesting prisons by releasing minor offenders or undertrials on bail to contain the spread of Covid-19. More than one in every three (36%) supported such a move. Police personnel were equally divided on supporting (43%) and opposing (46%) the arrest of protestors and activists who were active prior to the lockdown period. A majority of police personnel (52%) supported the arrest of lockdown violators, even though it would clearly go against the SC guidelines on decongestion of prisons, whereas two out of five (40%) opposed the same. Thus, there was a clear division of opinion among police personnel on these issues (*Figure 1.14*).

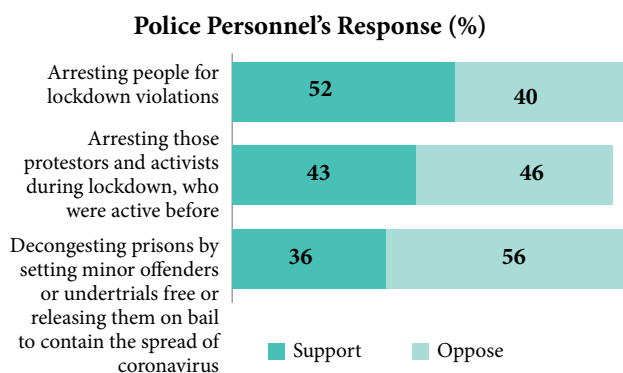
Figure 1.13 | Three in five police personnel found it very difficult to control the situation after the sudden lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: In your experience, how difficult was it for the police to control the situation, when the countrywide lockdown was suddenly announced-very difficult, somewhat difficult, not much difficult or not at all difficult?

Figure 1.14 | Fifty-six percent personnel oppose the decongestion of prisons to control the spread of Covid-19



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: Do you support or oppose-a. decongesting prisons by setting minor offenders or undertrials free or releasing them on bail to contain the spread of coronavirus; b. arresting those protestors and activists during lockdown, who were active before; c. arresting people for lockdown violations?

Digitising contact tracing using the Aarogya Setu app

The government rolled out the Aarogya Setu app for contact tracing Covid-19 infections in one's locality and highly encouraged people to use it. The objective of the app was to caution individuals against Covid-19 symptomatic persons near them and warn them about high-risk zones. However, it was only available on smart phones. It is, therefore, significant to know if it was frequently downloaded by common citizens. It is also important to know about its usage among police personnel for easing their Covid-19 duties.

More than two in every five (44%) claimed to have downloaded the app but a little more than one-third (37%) had not done so. Further, one in 10 did not have a smart phone and seven percent were not aware of this app. The app was more popular in Tier I cities as compared to Tier II and III cities. The rich, young and most literate segments largely

Table 1.1 | More downloads of the Aarogya Setu app reported among the rich, young and most literate

Did you download the Aarogya Setu app? Common People's Response (%)				
	Yes	No	Do not have a Smartphone	Have not heard about it
Overall	44	37	9	7
Tier I cities	52	32	8	3
Tier II/III cities	39	39	9	9
Poor	25	48	12	10
Lower Class	45	37	9	6
Middle Class	59	27	6	5
Rich	60	31	3	4
18-29 years	52	35	4	5
30-39 years	48	36	5	7
40-49 years	43	36	10	8
50-59 years	29	42	15	9
60 years and above	19	38	32	7
Non-literate	8	40	22	19
Below Primary	16	42	21	19
Primary pass / Middle fail	20	45	15	13
Middle pass / Matric fail	28	45	17	7
Up to Matric	40	39	8	9
Up to Intermediate	53	35	4	4
Graduates and above	60	32	4	2

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: Did you download the 'Aarogya Setu app' in your phone?

preferred to install the app. Only one-fourth of the poor had installed the app. Three in every five of the middle and rich classes had downloaded the app. Half the respondents aged between 18 and 29 years had downloaded the app and this decreased to roughly one in every five (19%) among people aged 60 years and above. Three in every five of the most literate people who possessed graduation or higher degrees had installed this app, followed by those who had passed intermediate levels. This eventually decreased to less than one in every 10 among the illiterate (Table 1.1).

The state-wise analysis shows that the highest instance of downloading the app came from Delhi where around three in every five (62%) installed it. This was closely followed by Andhra Pradesh where 58 percent reported the same. Surprisingly, the least installations were reported in Kerala, a state with a staggering number of Covid-19 cases, where three in every five (63%) responded in the negative. In Bihar (55%) and West Bengal (50%), around half reported that they did not download the app.

Table 1.2 | Higher download and usage of Aarogya Setu app by police reported in big cities

Police personnel's perception of Aarogya Setu app (%)						
	Asked to download the app		Helpful in tracing symptomatic people		Helpful in identifying containment zones	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Overall	79	19	53	35	56	33
Tier I cities	92	7	60	34	63	31
Tier II/III cities	72	26	50	36	53	34

Note: Rest of the respondents either hadn't heard about the app or did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: In many government offices, the employees were asked to download the 'Aarogya Setu app' on their phones. Were you and your colleagues made to compulsorily download this app?

Did the 'Aarogya Setu app' help police in tracing people with coronavirus symptoms?

Did the 'Aarogya Setu app' help police in identifying containment zones or high-risk zones?

As mandated by the government, it seemed compulsory for public servants on Covid-19 duty to download the Covid-19 tracing app. Four in every five police personnel had downloaded this app. Also, more than half the police personnel (53%) reported that the app had helped them in tracing symptomatic persons and identifying containment or high-risk zones (56%). The app installation also seemed more popular or maybe even compulsory in Tier I cities as nine in every 10 police personnel here had installed this app as compared to less than three-fourth (72%) in Tier II

and III cities. Three out of five (60%) police personnel deployed for Covid-19 duty in Tier I cities found it helpful in tracing symptomatic persons and identifying the high-risk zones in the city. However, only around half of the police personnel in Tier II and III cities found it helpful on these two counts (Table 1.2).

Conclusion

The sudden announcement of the nation-wide lockdown not only brought out the stark class divide and other social cleavages of the Indian society, but also exacerbated already existing inequalities. Containing the virus was of paramount importance but absence of information and lack of preparation for a nationwide shutdown merely stoked panic. Without adequate knowledge about the severity of the virus, as well as certainty of livelihoods in the beginning, anxiety and fear gripped all sections of the society --- the hungry and desperate migrant workers, common people as well as the police personnel. Police personnel in charge of directly tracing symptomatic persons and identifying high risk zones were understandably concerned about the nature of their new duty. They were also distressed about following many new and revised protocols of public dealing. Fear for their own safety extended to include concern for their family's well-being. Police personnel were also fearful of other factors like age and economic class that could prove to be a disadvantage during the lockdown. The findings reflect the vulnerabilities of such frontline workers and the steps they took to curb the transmission of the virus such as enforcing new rules of physical distancing and wearing masks, among others.

The government tried to help the common people and police force by encouraging Covid-19 protocols as well as rolling out digitised platforms like the Aarogya Setu app for self-protection and identifying containment zones. It did not work for non-literates and those without smart phones, and had very limited use for the poor and lower classes. Its use among the middle class and the rich was also at best limited. An overwhelming majority of the police personnel were asked to download the app but few personnel found it useful in contact tracing or in identifying contamination zones.

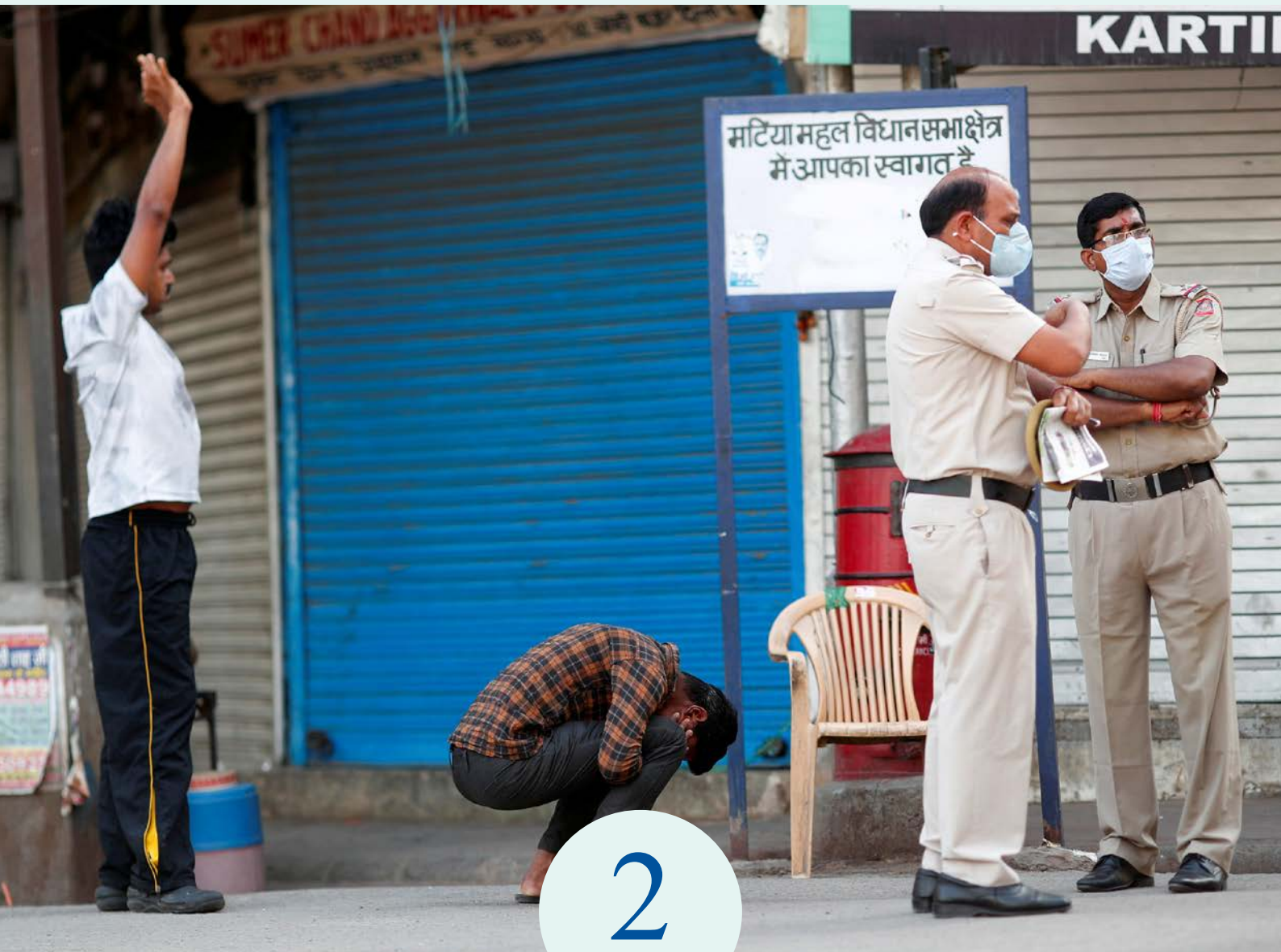
Whether the virus affected the rich more than the poor or the other way around will only be known after seeing the socio-economic profiles of the actual victims at a later date. But one thing was certain, the poor had to pay a much higher cost for the pandemic than the rich. Not only did they find it more difficult to get essential supplies, the poor, non-literates and the vulnerable faced other brutalities. They were more likely to be evicted if unable to pay house rents on time and were compelled to report for work, rath-

er than being allowed to work remotely. By showing undue strictness, the urban RWAs too could not be painted in a flattering light.

The police personnel too were being compelled at many places to come to work even if they were exhausted or if a family member was infected. Going on leave was not an option for a large number of police personnel despite having genuine reasons for doing so.

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Citizen-Police Interactions during the Pandemic

*Police officers punish people for allegedly breaking the lockdown rules in the old quarters of Delhi, India, March 31, 2020.
©REUTERS/Adnan Abidi.*

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- More than one out of two people (56%) witnessed the police providing help to the civilians during the lockdown. At the same time, however, a similar proportion of respondents (58%) also frequently witnessed the use of force by the police to enforce the lockdown.
- One out of three (33%) common people reported frequent confrontations between the civilians and the police during the lockdown.
- A majority of the common people (55%) reported fearing the police during the lockdown. Nearly three in five feared impositions of fine (57%) and being beaten by the police (55%).
- Nearly one out of two police personnel (49%) reported having frequently used force against migrant workers travelling back home. Further, one in three police personnel (33%) frequently encountered situations where the migrants were trying to enter shelters but police used force to prevent them from doing so.
- More than three out of five people (64%) believe that a longer notice before the lockdown could have prevented the migrant crisis.
- There was a clear class divide in the perceptions of the police during the lockdown. The poor people and those belonging to lower class were more fearful of the police during the lockdown, in particular, fearful of physical violence by the police. They were also more likely to see the police's instructions during this period as threatening. The police personnel, on the other hand, were also more likely to report the poor localities as being least compliant with the lockdown rules.
- Overall, nearly nine in 10 common people (86%) rated the behaviour of the police during the lockdown positively. Out of this, a quarter (25%) said that the behaviour was very good and three out of five (61%) reported it to be good.

Citizen-Police Interactions during the Pandemic

When the nationwide lockdown was announced on March 24, 2020 to break the chain of infections, stringent curbs were imposed on every type of movement with only a four-hour notice. This resulted in abrupt and serious disruptions in the daily lives of common people. Overnight public mobility restrictions and closure of shops, factories and businesses brought with them frustration, fear, and uncertainty about the future, particularly for the poor whose lives and livelihoods were affected. The police force, which was one of the essential services, was on the streets to ensure that the lockdown guidelines were being followed. An unfortunate consequence of this, however, were reports of frequent confrontations between the police and the people at many places.

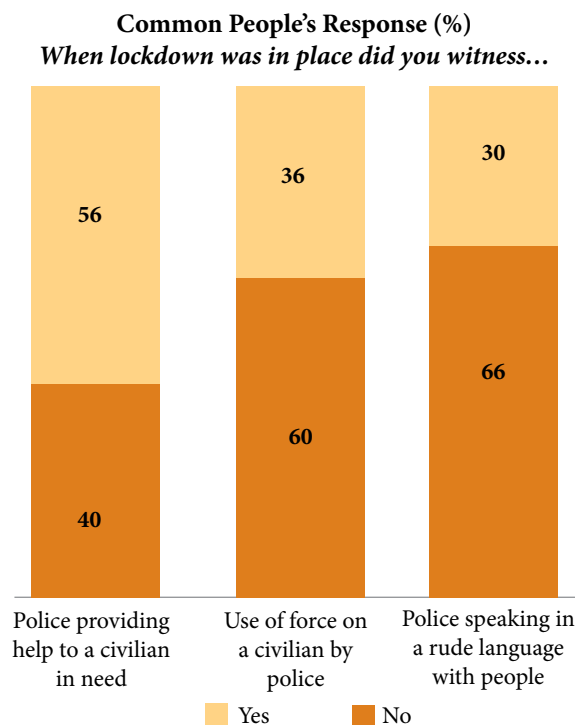
This chapter examines whether the developments during Covid-19 and the resultant lockdown affected citizens' perceptions of the police. The first section of the chapter looks at how people viewed the behaviour, attitude, and actions of the police personnel on the ground. The data shows that the public displayed a mixed response, based on what they saw and experienced. The second section of the chapter delves into the different kinds of fears and apprehensions of the general public during the time of the lockdown. The data reveals that people were worried when they had to go out of their houses during the lockdown, either to buy essential supplies and services or for work. The third section examines the police personnel's experiences with the people. It investigates the perception of the police personnel regarding how supportive the common people were in following the rules and regulations imposed during the lockdown. It further looks at the various steps taken by the police while implementing the lockdown rules. The fourth and the last section of the chapter deals with the plight of migrant workers, who were the most affected during the virtual shutdown of the nation. They were stranded far away from home with no jobs and limited access to food or money. We use the lens of both the police and the people to examine these issues.

Note: The study was conducted during the months of October and November in 2020, and therefore, it is confined to the first wave of the Covid-19 and the first phase of the consequential lockdown(s) that were imposed in 2020.

How people viewed police's behaviour, attitudes and actions during the lockdown

The general public expressed a more or less favourable opinion of the police's behaviour during the lockdown. Indicating a positive role played by the police, more than one out of two people (56%) witnessed the police providing help to the civilians during lockdown. However, at the same time, a notable proportion, about one in three, also reported that the police was rude (30%) and a nearly equal proportion (36%) said they witnessed the police using force against the civilians. Contrarily, about three in five denied witnessing the same (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 | More than one out of two people witnessed the police providing help to civilians during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Questions asked: When lockdown was in place, did you witness any of the following: a. Police speaking in a rude language with people? b. Use of force on a civilian by police? c. Police providing help to a civilian in need?

Further, those residing in Tier II/III cities were more likely to have witnessed the police being rude or using force on civilians compared to those respondents living in Tier I cities (*Figure 2.2*). Thus, while largely there was a positive response towards the police, a significant proportion of the respondents also reported police misuse of powers during the lockdown.

Across the states, police misbehaviour was the highest in Bihar, with around three out of five people (63%) stating that they witnessed the police using rude language with people during the lockdown. This was followed by Uttar Pradesh (45%). The lowest proportion of respondents who witnessed this were from Kerala (10%), Andhra Pradesh (16%) and Maharashtra (20%).

Further, Bihar was also the state where most people (67%) reported that they had witnessed police using force against common people. This was followed by Gujarat where a little over three out of five people (61%) reported this. The least use of force was again reported by people in Kerala (11%) and Maharashtra (20%).

On the positive front, the highest proportion of people witnessing the police providing help to those in need was in Gujarat (79%), followed by Andhra Pradesh (77%). On the other hand, the least proportion to report that was in Tamil Nadu (36%), Delhi (46%) and Bihar (46%).

Common people were further asked whether the police had ever stopped them or their family members when they ventured out to buy some essential supplies or were travelling for work and made them return. Close to half the

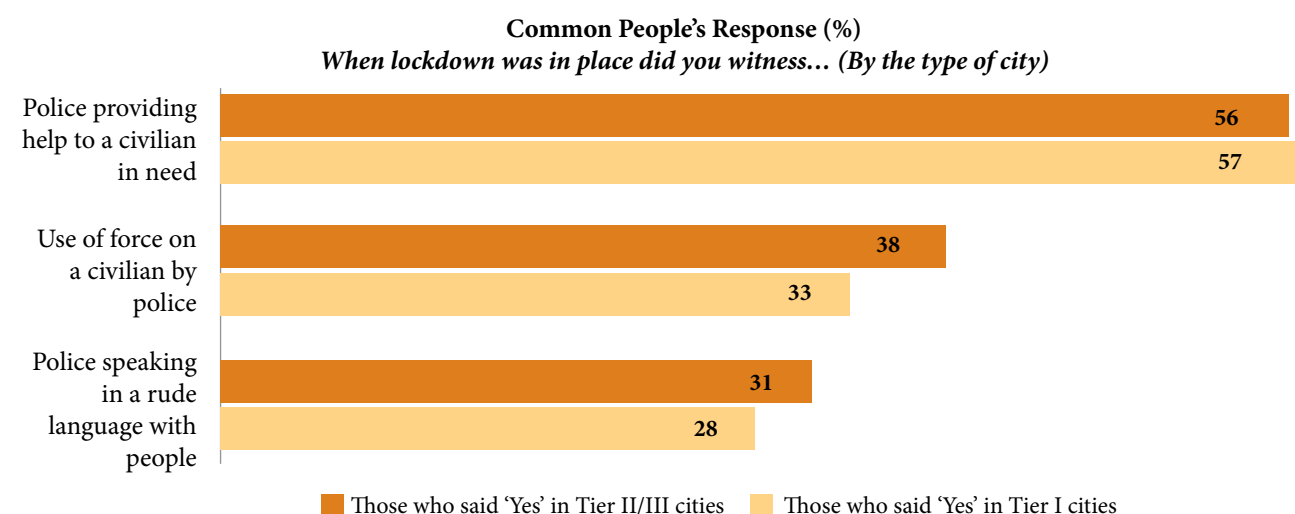
respondents (49%) stated that they were asked to return frequently (a few times and many times combined) when they were on their way to the workplace. More than half the respondents stated (55%) that they were asked to return frequently (a few times and many times combined) when they were out to buy essential items. Nearly one out of three respondents (31%) reported never having been stopped by the police when they went out to their workplaces while slightly more than one out of four reported never being stopped while out to buy essential items like food or medicines (*Figure 2.3*).

When asked whether there were confrontations and arguments between the police and people in their locality during the lockdown or the Covid-19 outbreak, one out of three (33%) common people stated this to be a rather common sight (very and somewhat common combined). However, a significant majority either completely denied having come across such incidences (40%), or rarely witnessed them (20%) (*Figure 2.4*).

Those residing in Tier II/III cities were a little more likely to have witnessed such confrontations than those in Tier I cities (*Figure 2.5*). Most confrontations (either very common or somewhat common) were reported by those in Gujarat (64%) followed by Bihar (54%) and Andhra Pradesh (50%) and least were reported in Kerala and Tamil Nadu (3% each).

In the study, police personnel were also asked whether they came across any incidents of such confrontations between citizens and police. While about two in five police personnel admitted to witnessing such incidences at one time or

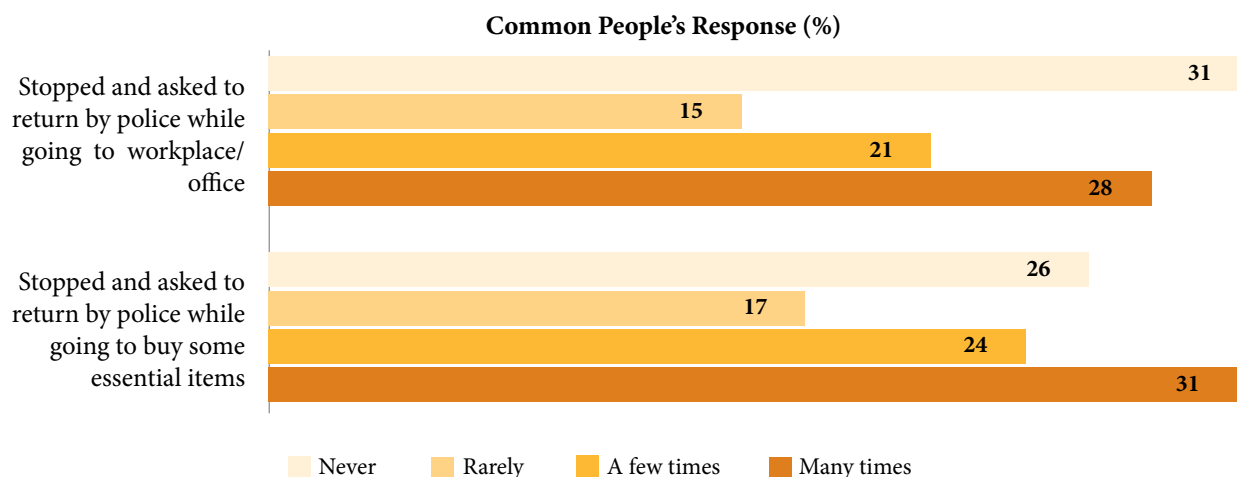
Figure 2.2 | People in Tier I cities more likely to have witnessed police using force against the citizens during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents either reported "No" or did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: When lockdown was in place, did you witness any of the following: a. Police speaking in a rude language with people? b. Use of force on a civilian by police? c. Police providing help to a civilian in need?

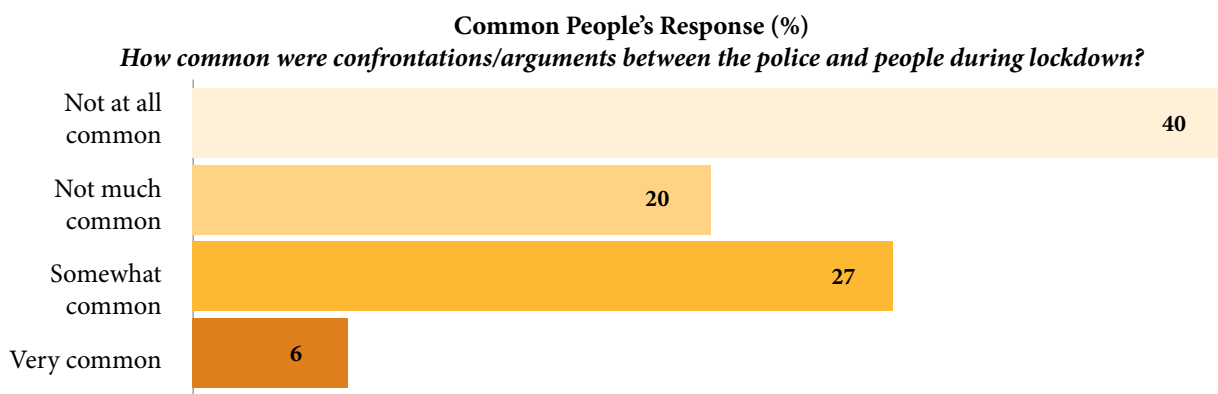
Figure 2.3 | Nearly one out of two people were frequently sent back by the police while travelling for work or while getting essential supplies during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off. Note: The category of 'Always' and 'Many times' have been merged to form 'Many times'.

Questions asked: How often did it happen with you or your family members that you/they.....? a. Went out to buy some essential food or medicines but the police stopped you/them and forced to return? b Went out to your workplace/office but the police stopped you/them and forced to return?

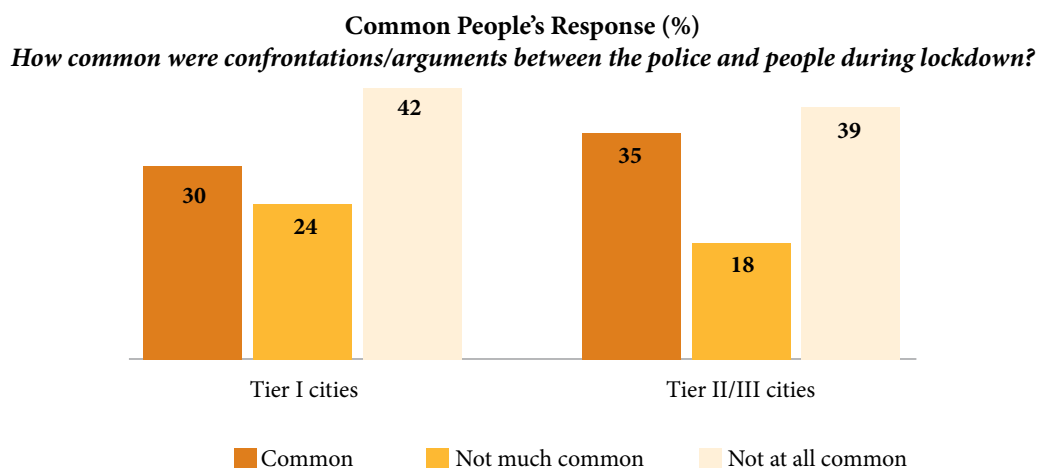
Figure 2.4 | For one in three, a confrontation between police and civilians was a common sight



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: During the coronavirus outbreak/lockdown, how common were the confrontations/arguments between police and the residents in your locality- very, somewhat, not much or not at all?

Figure 2.5 | People in Tier II/III cities more likely to have witnessed confrontations between the people and the police during the lockdown

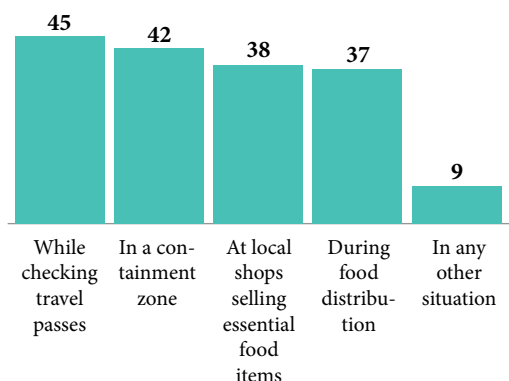


Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off. The category of 'very common' and 'somewhat common' have been merged to form 'common'.

another, most confrontations were reported while checking travel passes and in the containment zones. This was followed by confrontations at local shops selling essential food items and during food distributions (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6 | Most confrontations between the people and the police occurred while checking travel passes and in containment zones

Police personnel who witnessed an incident of a confrontation between local people and the police... (%)



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: When lockdown was in place, did you come across any incident of a confrontation between local people and the police- a. At local shops selling essential food items? b. During food distribution? c. While checking travel passes? d. In a containment zone? e. In any other situation?

Indicating that it is a more serious issue in the big metro cities, police deployed in Tier I cities were far more likely to have come across such confrontations, as compared to those in Tier II/III cities. While nearly half the police personnel reported confrontations at local shops, the propor-

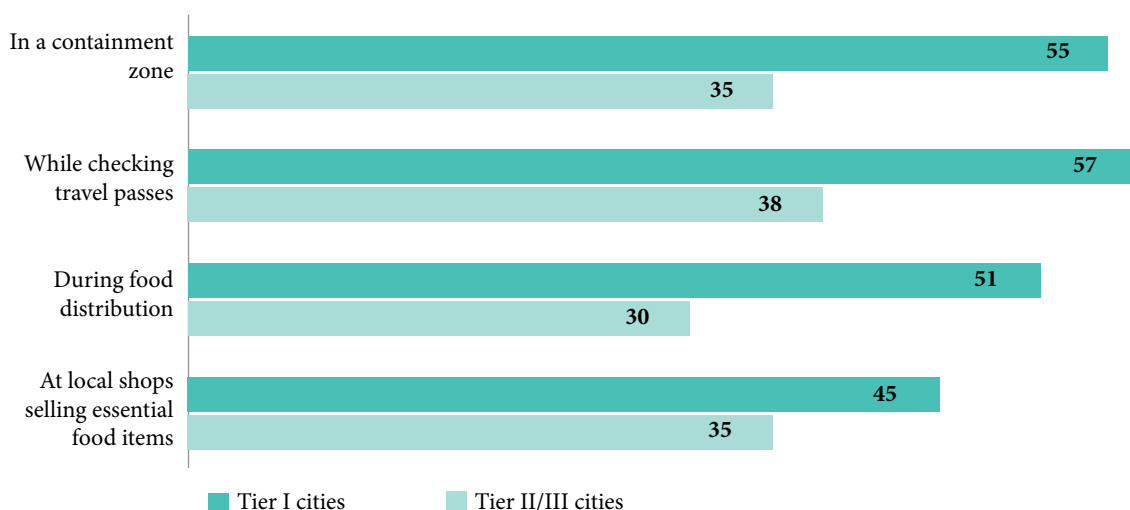
tion crossed the half-way mark in the other three situations in Tier I cities (Figure 2.7).

The spread of Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdown meant new restrictions accompanied with the threat of punitive action. Our data shows that though not everyone followed the new rules and regulation with enthusiasm, but overall, a majority of the people seem to have adhered to these rules. While about one out of three people (31%) reported that in their locality people fully adhered to the new rules, close to half (44%) said that these rules were followed to a large extent. A little over one-sixths (17%) stated that they were followed to some extent. A negligible proportion (6%) believed that the people largely disregarded the lockdown rules (Figure 2.8). There was not much difference across the types of cities, as about three out of four people from both Tier I and Tier II/III cities claimed that people were following the rules and regulations imposed on them to a great extent.

In the study we asked the civilians whether they came across police personnel using some kind of force, like hitting them with a *danda* (a stick or a baton), in order to make people follow the rules during lockdown. Disturbingly, close to three out of five respondents reported that force was used either often (19%) or sometimes (39%) by the police during the lockdown. While nearly one in five (18%) came across such a situation rarely, a little more than one in every five reported never having come across such a situation during the lockdown (Figure 2.9).

Figure 2.7 | Police in Tier I cities far more likely to report confrontations between the people and the police compared to those in Tier II/III cities

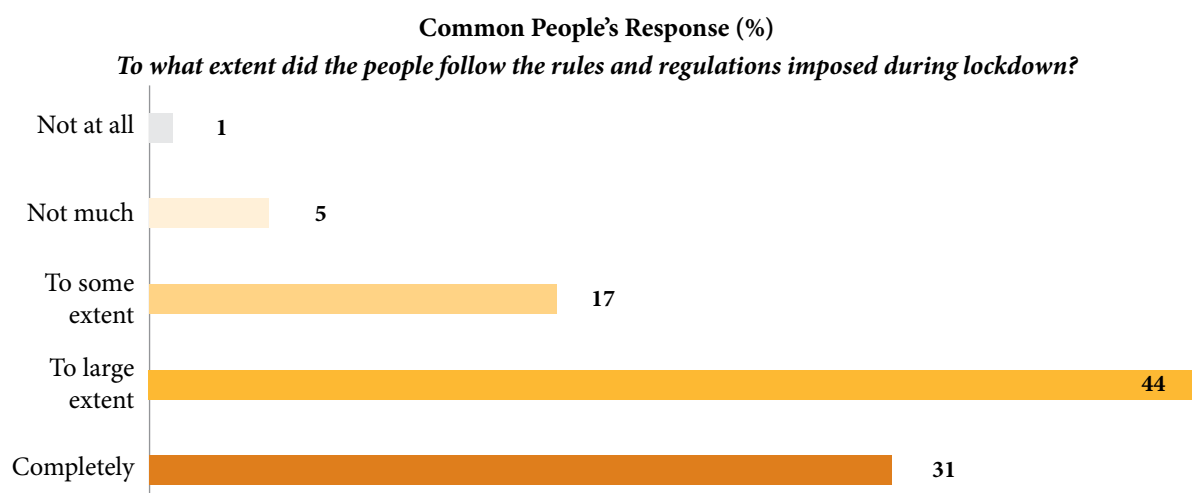
Police personnel who witnessed confrontations between local people and police... (%)



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: When lockdown was in place, did you come across any incident of a confrontation between local people and the police- a. At local shops selling essential food items? b. During food distribution? c. While checking travel passes? d. In a containment zone? e. In any other situation?

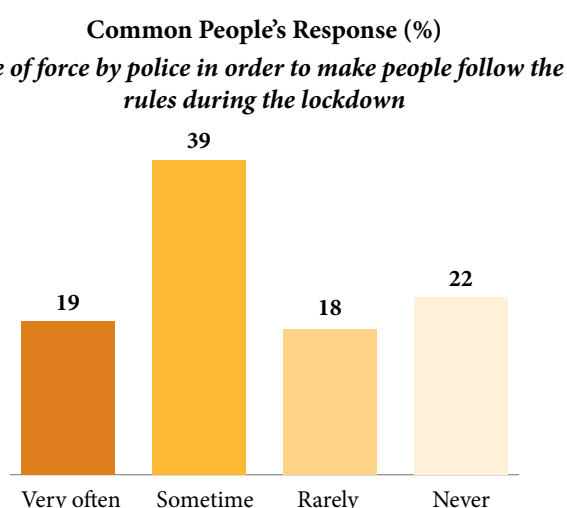
Figure 2.8 | An overwhelming majority of the people reported adherence to the rules imposed during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: According to you, to what extent did the people living in this locality follow the rules and regulations imposed during lockdown – completely, to a large extent, to some extent, not much, or not at all?

Figure 2.9 | Nearly three out of five people witnessed police use of force during the lockdown to make people abide by the rules



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: How often did you come across a situation where the police used some kind of force, like hitting with a danda (stick), in order to make people follow the rules during lockdown – very often, sometimes, rarely, or never?

Those in Tier II/III cities were slightly more likely to report seeing the police using some kind of force (59% in Tier II/III cities and 56% in Tier I cities). Further, the use of force (very often or sometimes) by the police was reported the most by people in Karnataka (88%), followed by Bihar (83%). At the brighter end of the spectrum was Kerala, where close to seven in 10 people denied having seen the police using such force (67%). This also explains why people in Kerala reported the least fear of the police beating them when they went out to buy essential supplies or for work.

Surveillance and the fear of the police

As the country faced a rise in the number of Covid cases, strong surveillance undertaken by the police was witnessed across the country. Several police forces adopted the use of new technology to beef up the surveillance, such as the use of drones by Delhi Police in containment zones. This increased surveillance often led to the use of disproportionate force by the police and incidents of police violence and custodial deaths as reported in the local and national media. Thus, people now had to contend with an additional worry-- fear of arbitrary state violence, apart from being anxious about accessing basic needs like food and other essential items during the lockdown (Venkataramakrishnan, 2020).

It must be noted here that it was also an extremely challenging time for the police, given the sudden imposition of the lockdown without adequate notice or planning. The Prime Minister himself had to send out messages asking Indians not to panic, when there seemed to be lack of clarity on how they would access essential services during the initial three-week stay-at-home period (Ibid). Various viral photos and videos from several states showed police beating up people who were trying to get essential supplies. In West Bengal, the police allegedly beat up a 32-year-old man to death, after he stepped out of his home to get milk (*The Wire*, 2020). Another video from Uttar Pradesh showed police forcing migrant workers trying to walk home to hop on the street to humiliate them. Police in Maharashtra allegedly beat homeless people to evict them from streets (Shantha, 2020). Force was also used against daily-wage workers (vegetable and fruit vendors, milk sellers, auto rickshaw and taxi drivers), and others delivering essential goods (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Police in

several states punished or publicly humiliated people, forcing them to hold posters saying “I am an enemy of society because I will not stay at home” (Human Rights Watch, 2020; The Free Press Journal, 2020).

On the other hand, the humane side of the Indian Police was also witnessed by many. One must not overlook that it was a period of incredible stress for the police force as well. Hardly prepared, badly equipped, with nil or very little protective gear, overworked and most importantly, facing the threat of infection themselves, the police, as a frontline agency with multiple levels of service delivery, were also required to ensure lockdown restrictions. There were a bevy of other challenges to be reckoned with during a time of collective immobility. Some people took the lockdown very casually, while healthcare staff were attacked in many places. Even landlords tried to evict frontline workers such as airline staff and healthcare workers in many places. Dealing with such incidents also became a responsibility of the police (George, 2020).

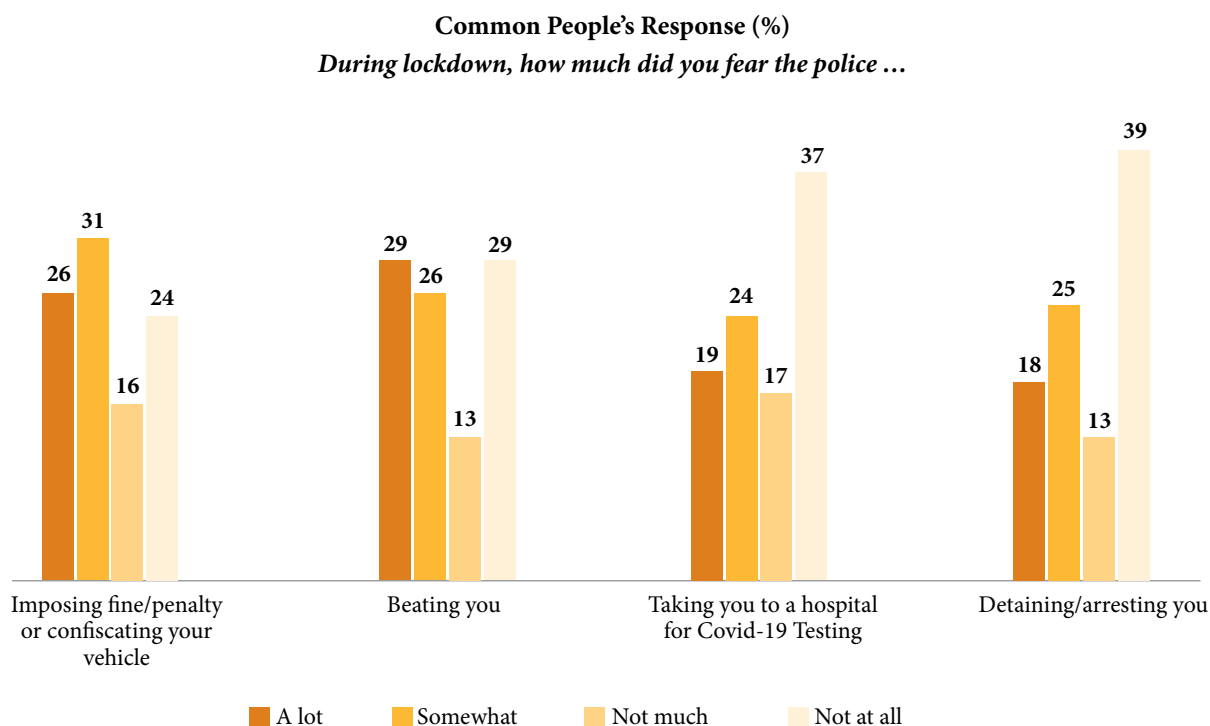
Though the police generate little trust in the eyes of the common people in the best of times, it can be safely said that their compassionate side was visible during the pandemic. Since they were tasked with assisting the vulnerable during this global health crisis, various images surfaced across media platforms (See Chapter 6) where they could

be seen telling migrants about the government taking care of their “food, water and shelter” until they returned to their homes (Yadav, 2020). Police were also seen singing songs to motivate people and generate awareness, delivering birthdays cakes to children and the elderly, giving food to the homeless and providing essential medicines to those in need (Pandey, 2020ⁱ; Guru & Deshmukh, 2020).

However, during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the level of fear of the police amongst the people remained high, as seen in *Figure 2.10* below.

The study tried to delve into the different kinds of fears that the general public had during the lockdown. The data reveals that people were fearful when they had to go out of their houses either to buy essential supplies and services or for work, during the lockdown. They were most fearful of the police imposing fines, an anxiety reported by 57 per cent people (a lot and somewhat combined), with a little over one fourths (26%) fearing it a lot and another one-thirds (31%) being somewhat fearful. With the worsening Covid-19 situation, several states had taken to imposing fines on citizens for not wearing masks in public, spitting and consumption of tobacco in public places and violation of other Covid-19 related guidelines (The Indian Express, 2020). Fear of being penalised for these actions was followed by the trepidation of police beating them. This was

Figure 2.10 | More than one out of two people feared imposition of fine or use of physical force by the police during the lockdown



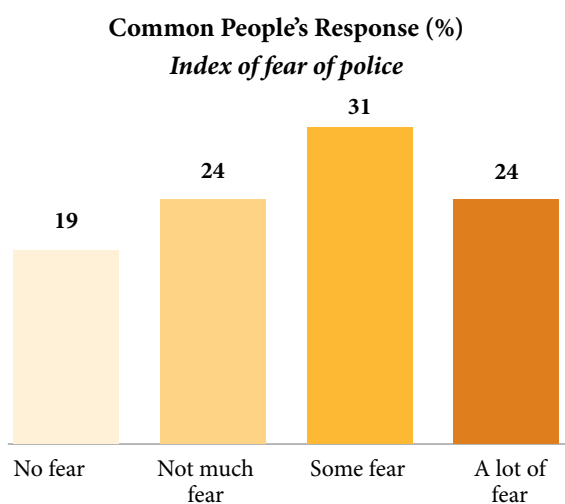
Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: During lockdown, whenever you went out of your home to buy essentials or for work, how much fear did you have of the following – a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all? a. Fear of police imposing fine/penalty or confiscating your vehicle? b. Fear of police beating you? c. Fear of police taking you to a hospital for testing? d. Fear of police detaining/arresting you?

reported by the majority 55 percent of people (29% reporting a lot of fear and 26% reporting some fear). Over two out of five people (43%) reported being fearful of the police taking them to the hospital for coronavirus testing as well as police detaining or arresting them (Figure 2.11).

An index of ‘fear of police’ was created using the responses of people on the above four questions¹. The study found that a little over half the people (55%) stated that they were fearful of the police imposing fines, beating them, taking them for Covid-19 testing or detaining and arresting them. Of these, nearly one-fourth (24%) had a lot of fear and one out of three (31%) said that they had some fear. Further, close to one-fourth claimed not to have much fear, while 19 percent reported having no fear at all (Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.11 | One out of four people had a high level of fear of the police during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Variation across age, gender, locality, and one's class was visible on how much people feared the police. Whereas a little less than half (47%) of the women in the study stated that they had fear of the police, the proportion increased by 14 percentage points when it came to men. Additionally, variations across age categories suggest that the fear of the police declined with age, as the younger ones were more fearful compared to the older cohorts. Two out of five people (39%) in the 60 years and above age group stated that they had fear as against three out of five people (58%) in the younger age group of 18–29 years (Table 2.1).

Across classes, the fear of the police was expressed along predictable lines. Those belonging to poor, lower, and middle classes were far more fearful of the police, compared to the rich (Table 2.1). Delving further, even though the fear of police imposing fines was the highest across all classes, the poor feared the police beating them up the most, compared to others.

Table 2.1 | Men, young and lower-income groups feared the police the most

During lockdown, how much did you fear police ...	Common People's Response (%)		
	No fear	Not Much Fear	Fear of police
Male	15	23	61
Female	25	26	47
18-29 years of age	15	25	58
30-39 years of age	16	24	58
40-49 years of age	20	25	54
50-59 years of age	23	21	54
60 years of age and above	36	23	39
Tier I cities	14	29	54
Tier II/III cities	21	21	56
Poor	20	20	57
Lower Class	15	25	59
Middle Class	19	25	54
Rich	29	30	41

Note: The categories of 'some fear' and 'a lot of fear' have been merged to form 'Fear of police'.

Table 2.2 | Those who witnessed the police using force during lockdown were more fearful of the police

Came across a situation where police used some kind of force, like hitting with a danda (stick), in order to make people follow the rules	How much did you fear police beating you? - Opinion of common people (%)			
	A lot	Some-what	Not much	Not at all
Very often	39	32	11	16
Sometimes	39	29	15	16
Rarely	27	23	16	31
Never	8	19	12	60

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: During lockdown, whenever you went out of your home to buy essentials or for work, how much did you fear the police beating you – a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all? and...

How often did you come across a situation where the police used some kind of force, like hitting with a danda (stick), in order to make people follow the rules during lockdown-very often, sometimes, rarely, or never?

One also notes that those who had come across the police using force, like hitting citizens with a danda in order to make them follow the guidelines for the lockdown were more likely to have the fear of police themselves. Among those who had never come across such a situation, less than one in every 10 (8%) said that they had a lot of fear

about police beating them. These numbers increased almost fivefold amongst those who had often witnessed the police using force (Table 2.2).

During the lockdown, the police had issued various instructions to people regarding movement restrictions and Covid protection protocol. Largely, people viewed these messages in a positive light. Four out of five respondents (80%) reported that these messages were an act of care and protection. Only 15 percent of the respondents viewed these messages as a threat. A higher proportion of those residing in Tier I cities saw the messages from the police as a threat compared to Tier II/III cities (19% vis-à-vis 13% respectively). The younger respondents, men and those belonging to poor economic classes, were more likely to see the messages and instructions from the police as a threat (Table 2.3).

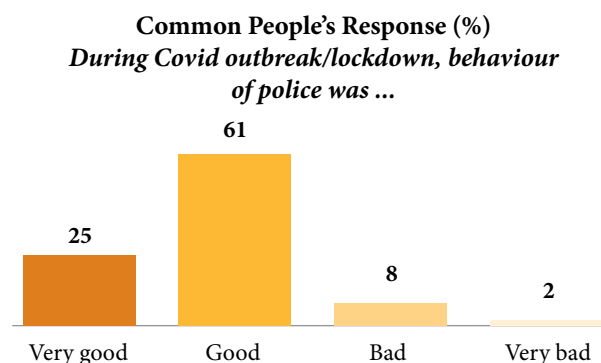
Table 2.3 | During the lockdown, four out of five people saw the messaging by the police as an act of care; but men, young, and poor people slightly more likely to feel threatened

During Covid-19 outbreak/lockdown, did you see the messages and instructions given by the police as	Common People's Response (%)	
	As a threat	As an act of care/protection
Overall	15	80
Male	18	79
Female	11	83
18-29 years of age	17	80
30-39 years of age	15	80
40-49 years of age	15	81
50-59 years of age	14	81
60 years of age and above	10	83
Poor	16	77
Lower Class	17	79
Middle Class	14	84
Rich	11	88
Tier I cities	19	75
Tier II/III cities	13	83

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: During coronavirus outbreak/lockdown, police instructed general public to follow various rules and regulations. How did you see all those messages and instructions given by the police? Did you see them as a threat/ warning to scare you or did you look at it as an act of care/ protection?

When people were asked about the police's behaviour in their locality during the lockdown, close to nine of every 10 (86%) rated it positively. Out of this, a quarter said that the behaviour was very good and 61 percent reported it to be good (Figure 2.12). Only about one in every 10 rated the behaviour of the police as either bad or very bad. Hence, the overall attitude of the public towards the police's behaviour was a positive one.

Figure 2.12 | Nearly nine in 10 rated the behavior of the police positively



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: During lockdown, at some places police was very well behaved while at some other places police misbehaved with the common people. Considering this locality, how do you rate the behaviour of the police during lockdown --very good, good, bad, or very bad?

Table 2.4 | People in Tier II/III cities more likely to positively rate police's behaviour during lockdown, compared to those from Tier I cities

During Covid outbreak/ lockdown, behaviour of police was...	Common People's Response (%)	
	Good	Bad
Tier I cities	82	11
Tier II/III cities	87	9
Witnessed police speaking in a rude language with people?		
No	91	5
Yes	74	21
Witnessed use of force on people by police?		
No	91	4
Yes	77	19
Witnessed police providing help to people in need?		
No	80	14
Yes	91	6

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Note: The category of 'Very good' and 'Good' have been merged to form 'Good' and the categories of 'Very Bad' and 'Bad' have been merged to form 'Bad'.

Comparing perceptions across cities, people residing in Tier II/III cities were more likely to state that in their locality, the behaviour of the police was good (87% vis-à-vis 82%). Further, those who had witnessed the police speaking in a rude manner were far less likely to say that the police's behaviour in their locality was good, compared to those who had not (74% vis-à-vis 91%). Those who had witnessed the police using force, as against those who had not, were also less likely to rate the behaviour as good (77% vis-à-vis 91%). In contrast, those who had witnessed the police providing help to those in need were more likely to state that the police's behaviour was good, compared to those who had not (91% vis-à-vis 80%) (Table 2.4).

Police's experiences with the people

Right from the beginning of the lockdown, the task of enforcing the pandemic protocol fell largely upon the police across the country. It turned out to be a tough job for them as lockdown-induced movement restrictions go against the social ethic of a closely knit community life, street cultures of everyday life expressions, lifestyles as well as adjustment to a hot and humid climate where access to open spaces becomes a basic necessity (Kapoor, 2020). The problems were compounded by the economic compulsions of the poor who work on daily wages, and the fear of essential services shutting down. This led to huge crowds on the streets and public avenues despite movement restrictions and stay at home orders (Ibid). Inevitably, the police came under duress as they had to deal with a difficult and unprecedented situation.

Table 2.5 | Police personnel reported poor localities to be least compliant with lockdown rules

How supportive were the people in following the lockdown rules?	Police Personnel's Response (%)			
	Very	Some-what	Not much	Not at all
Poor localities	24	49	16	7
Middle class localities	41	44	8	5
Rich class localities	52	30	6	8

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: In some localities people were very supportive and properly followed all the rules and regulations during lockdown, while in some others they were not supportive at all. What about your region? How supportive were the people in: a. poor localities, b. middle class localities, and c. rich localities?

Evidence suggests that the police got maximum support from localities of the rich, followed by the middle class and the poor. Whether this is because of the financial needs of daily wagers and people from the poor localities which trumped the safety protocols during the lockdown or lack of awareness or prejudice by the police or for any other reason needs to be further probed. While the option of working from home was open for many middle-class and

rich people, such alternatives were not available for many who depend on physical or casual labour and work in the unorganised sector. According to a study conducted by the Pew Research Centre, poverty may have doubled during the first wave of the pandemic in 2020. Thus, lack of co-operation from the poor may be stemming from some of these concerns that translated into extremely difficult lived realities for the poor during the lockdown.

This pattern shifts a little when one combines the responses of 'very' and 'somewhat' support as mentioned by the police. The most support came from people residing in middle-class localities (85%) followed by rich (82%) and poor localities (73%). As the lockdown hurt the poor the most due to lack of food, shelter, and other basic needs, this could have made them more anxious, resulting in less support towards the police (Table 2.5).

Table 2.6 | One in two police personnel report penalising the violators during lockdown very frequently; one in three personnel report use of force frequently

How many times did you or your team have to ...	Police Personnel's Response (%)			
	Very Often	A few times	Rarely	Never
Impose fine/penalty on the people who violated lockdown rules	50	24	10	14
Leave them after giving some minor punishment	34	32	13	17
Resort to the use of force	7	27	27	35
Detain/arrest them	12	25	25	35

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: During last few months, how many times did you or your team had to take to the following-- many times, a few times, rarely or never? a. Imposing fine/penalty with the people who violated lockdown rules b. Leaving them after giving some minor punishment c. Take resort to the use of force d. Detaining/arresting them

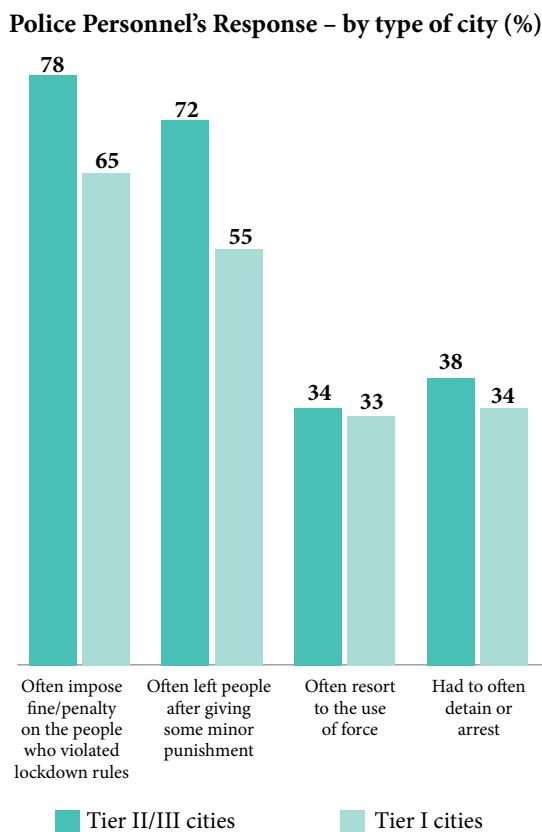
When police personnel were asked about the different kinds of action they had to resort to while implementing the lockdown rules, half the personnel said that they or their team had to very often impose fines on people who had violated the lockdown rules. About one-fourth (24%) said that they had to do this a few times. Two out of three (66%) police personnel interviewed said that they had resorted to giving minor punishments (on their own discretion) and then letting them go, in case any rules were broken. Of this, one in three (34%) stated that they or their team had done this often and another one third (32%) claimed this to have happened a few times.

Though seven percent of police personnel reported using force frequently, about one-fourth (27%) claimed that they or their team had to use force a few times during the

last few months. When compared to the common people's response, 19 percent of whom said that use of force by the police was very common while 39 percent said that it somewhat common (Figure 2.9 given in the earlier section), police personnel's reporting of such incidents is much lower. Further, 12 percent of the police personnel had to resort to detaining or arresting someone many times and a quarter said that they had to resort to this action a few times (Table 2.6).

Police personnel in Tier II/III cities reported imposing fine, letting people go after giving punishment, using force, and often detaining or arresting if needed in higher proportion than those deployed in Tier I cities (Figure 2.13).

Figure 2.13 | Police personnel from Tier II/III cities reported employing harsher means to impose lockdown rules compared to those from Tier I cities



Note: These figures are for only those who either reported either 'Very Often' or 'Often'. Rest of the respondents either responded "rarely", "never" or did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: During last few months, how many times did you or your team had to take to the following-- many times, a few times, rarely or never? a. Imposing fine/penalty with the people who violated lockdown rules b. Leaving them after giving some minor punishment c. Take resort to the use of force b. Detaining/arresting them

Police personnel in Tamil Nadu (96%), followed by Kerala (88%), were more likely to report that their team had to often impose fines. Tamil Nadu (89%) and Kerala (50%) again topped the list, on the issue of giving minor punishment, apparently on discretion. Maximum use of force (either

very often or a few times) was reported by the police personnel in Bihar (50%) and Delhi (49%). Police in Andhra Pradesh (61%), followed by Karnataka (49%), reported the greatest number of incidents when they or their team had to detain or arrest people, either often or a few times.

Migrant workers and the lockdown

A WHO study reveals that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a highly negative impact on the living and working conditions of refugees and migrants (W.H.O., 2020). This study, involving more than 30,000 refugees and migrants from different parts or regions around the world, has several key findings. More than half the respondents across the world say that Covid-19 brought about greater levels of depression, fear, anxiety, and loneliness (Ibid.). Another study by the World Bank estimates that the magnitude of internal migration is about two-and-a-half times that of international migration. Within India, an estimated 40 million internal migrant workers, largely in the informal economy, were severely impacted by the Covid-19 lockdown (Patel, 2020). The Supreme Court had asked the central government to ensure that food, water, and shelter were provided to the migrants and later state governments were tasked with arranging institutional quarantine for all those who had returned from the cities (Sengupta & Jha, 2020). Many of those who managed to return home on foot (as transportation systems were shut) faced challenges of being denied entry into the villages because residents suspected that they were potential carriers of the coronavirus disease (Kumar & Mohanty, 2020; *Pune Mirror*, 2020; Pandey, 2020; Naim, 2020; *Hindustan Times*, 2020).

As the lockdown left millions of migrants stranded far away from home with no job, food, or money, they started their journey back home on foot. The police found it very difficult to prevent these migrants from walking to their homes in distant villages. More than four out of five (82%) police personnel said that it was either very difficult or somewhat difficult to control them. In contrast, just eleven percent stated that it was not very difficult and only three percent stated that it was not at all difficult to control the migrants who were walking home (Table 2.7). Though this problem was faced in both types of cities, it was slightly bigger for the police personnel deployed in Tier I cities.

In the study we asked common people whether they witnessed the police facilitating the homeward journey of stranded migrants at bus terminals/railway stations, or even those on foot. Close to half responded affirmatively (44% and 49% respectively). Close to three out of five (57%) reported that they witnessed the police facilitating the availability of essential food items to them. About one in three claimed that they witnessed the police helping

Table 2.7 | Two out of five police personnel found it very difficult to manage the migrant workers travelling home during the lockdown

How difficult was it for the police in this region to control migrants walking towards their homes...	Police Personnel's Response (%)
Very difficult	38
Somewhat difficult	44
Not much	11
Not at all	3

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: At some places, it was very difficult for the police to control migrants walking towards their homes while lockdown was in place. In your experience, how difficult was it for the police in this region to control migrants walking towards their homes – very, somewhat, not much or not at all?

people make arrangements for their stay/rest during the night (Table 2.8). However, the opinions and experiences of the migrant workers who were travelling back home themselves might differ from those of the general public. As described in Chapter 7, in a Common Cause report, titled 'Police Response to the Pandemic: A Rapid Survey of Migrant and Aid Workers' (forthcoming), it was found that amongst the migrant workers who were travelling back home from Delhi, Rajasthan, or Gujarat during the lockdown, less than four percent respondents said that they were provided ration or cooked food by the police while about two percent said they were provided health services by the police during the journey.

We also looked at the proportion of respondents among police personnel who were deployed for helping the migrants. The data revealed that close to three out of five police personnel (57%) were deployed to help the migrants

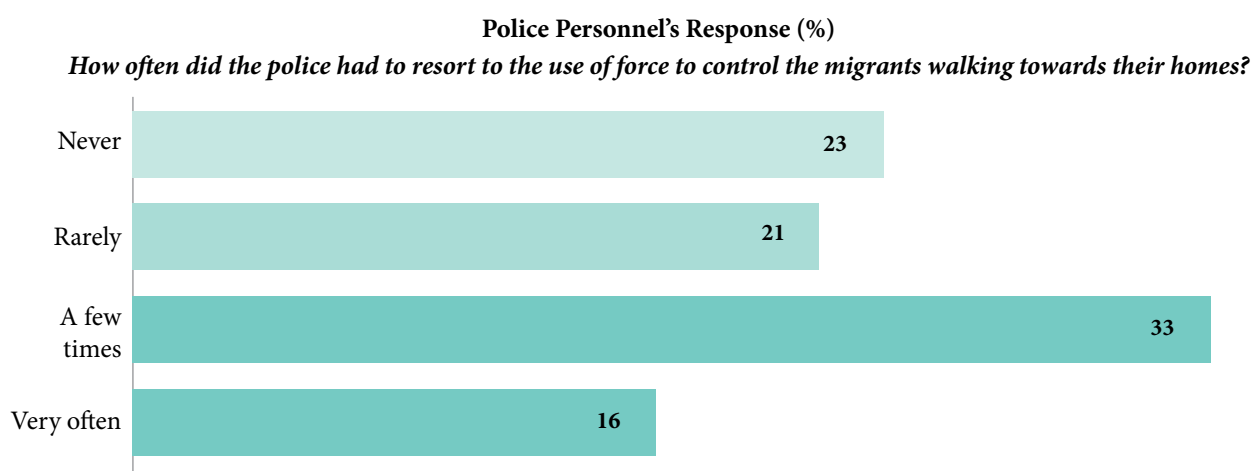
Table 2.8 | One out of two people witnessed police facilitating migrants in their homeward journey and providing food to the migrants during the lockdown

	Did you witness any police personnel... (Response of common people - %)	Were you deployed in.. (Response of police personnel - %)
	Yes	Yes
...Facilitating homeward journey of stranded migrants at bus terminals or railway stations	44	57
...Facilitating homeward journey of stranded migrants who had to walk on foot	49	58
...Helping in making the essential food items available to them	57	58
...In making arrangements for their stay/rest during night	35	52

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer or said 'No'. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: During lockdown, thousands of people were stranded at different places and wanted to go home. Did you witness any police personnel (Questions asked to police personnel: During lockdown, thousands of migrant laborers were stranded at different places and wanted to go home. Were you deployed to facilitate them with any of the following?) a. Facilitating homeward journey of stranded migrants at Bus Terminals/Railway Stations? b. Facilitating homeward journey of stranded migrants who had to walk on foot? c. In making the essential food items available to them? d. Making arrangements for their stay/rest during night?

Figure 2.14 | One out of two police personnel report frequently having used force against migrants travelling back home during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: And how often did the police had to resort to the use of force to control the migrants walking towards their homes-- very often, a few times, rarely or never?

at bus terminals and stations. The same proportion of personnel (58%) reported that they were deployed to help migrants walking home and make essential food items available to them. A little over half of the respondents (52%) were deployed to take care of their living arrangements and rest (Table 2.8).

As already mentioned above, the police personnel stated that they found it very difficult to prevent the migrants from walking to their homes and in controlling the situation of chaos caused due to sudden declaration of lockdown. Underscoring the grim predicament of migrant workers, the police, at times, had to resort to using force to get them to follow orders. In such a situation, while one sixth (16%) of police personnel claimed to have resorted to the use of force against such migrants ‘often’, one third (33%) claimed to use it ‘a few times’ (Figure 2.14).

Further, close to two-thirds (65%) of the police personnel stated that there was enough space for the migrants in the shelters arranged for them. However, a greater proportion of those deputed in Tier I cities, compared to those in Tier II/III cities, claimed that there was enough room for migrants (73% *vis-à-vis* 62%).

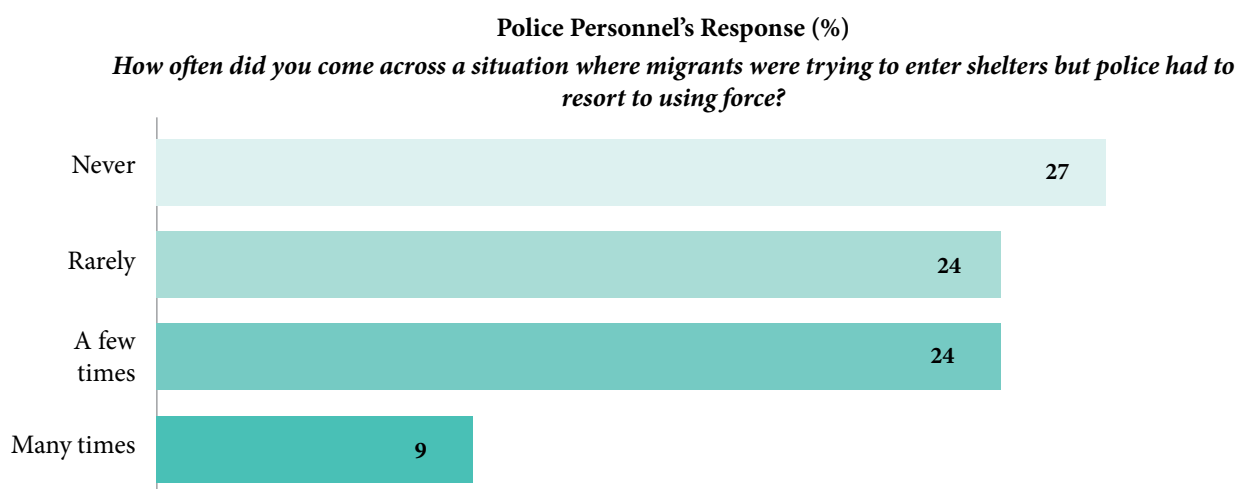
Highlighting the sorry state of affairs for stranded migrants, one-third of the police personnel said that they encountered situations where the police had to use force to prevent migrants from entering shelters as there was no space (Figure 2.15). In fact, personnel who reported a shortage of space in shelter homes were also more likely to report the use of force to prevent migrants from entering shelters.

The misery of migrants was one of the biggest non-medical tragedies of the Covid-19 crisis. The sudden lockdown stoked unprecedented panic when work and wages disappeared into thin air. A nationwide shut down, announced at four hours’ notice, left many migrants with just one option – a long march home. The study asked the common people whether the timings of the lockdown could have prevented the crisis of domestic migration in India. We read out two contrasting statements and asked people to tell us which statement they agreed with. Close to two out of three common people (64%) agreed with the statement: “Had the government given some time before enforcing lockdown, the issue of migrants stranded at different locations would not have arisen.” In contrast, a smaller proportion, one out of three (31%) respondents, supported the government’s decisions with the view: “if the government had given some time before enforcing lockdown, the basic purpose behind lockdown would have been defeated.” (Figure 2.16)

Conclusion

The chapter examined the dynamics of interaction between the citizens and the police during the nationwide coronavirus lockdown. It looks at these interactions from the perspectives of both the common people and police personnel. Though the majority of the people rated the behaviour of the police during the lockdown as good, there were many instances of people witnessing confrontation and altercations between the two. There were several incidents of the police using force against common citizens as well. People also reported being stopped and asked to return when they were out to buy essential supplies and/or when they were on their way to the workplace. All this

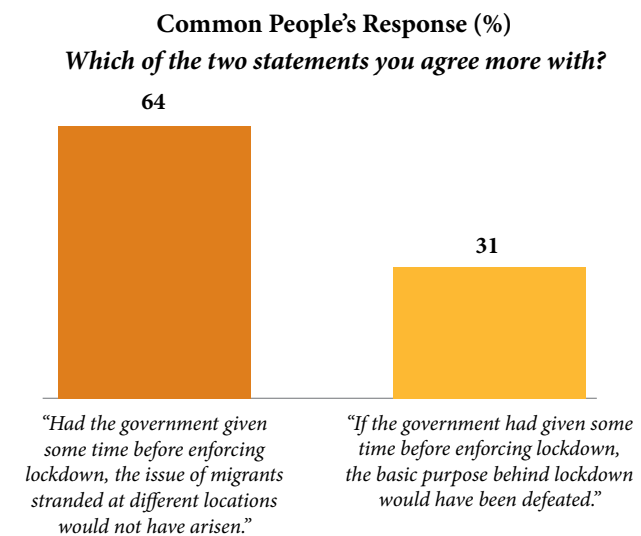
Figure 2.15 | One in three police personnel frequently encountered situations where the migrants were trying to enter shelters but police used force to prevent them from doing so



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: How often did you come across a situation where migrants were trying to enter shelters but the police had to resort to using force to stop them, as there was no space for them in the shelters – many times, a few times, rarely or never?

Figure 2.16 | Two in three people believe that a longer notice before the lockdown could have prevented the migrant crisis



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: I will read out two statements, tell me which of the two you agree more with? (the two statements are provided in the table)

resulted in common people developing a fear of the police, with half of the respondents admitting so.

Overall, the police claimed to have received support from everyone but the least support came their way from those residing in low-income group localities. This is perhaps because the poor who live cheek by jowl in slums and congested tenements were the worst affected during the lockdown. Even the police claimed to have fined people at times. They even went further, using force, detaining, and arresting common people when rules were not followed.

In addition, the police struggled to deal with the teeming migrants, battling severe fatigue, hunger, and heat, who were walking back home during restrictions. Though the common people did witness the police facilitating the journey of stranded migrants, helping them with food and arranging shelters, this proportion was not very large. The police also claimed to have used force in some incidents while dealing with migrants returning home. The majority of the common people believed that the management of the lockdowns could have been done better in the biggest crisis of domestic migration in India.

Endnotes

Index on fear of police

The index was constructed by taking into account four questions asked during the survey. They are:

During lockdown, whenever you went out of your home to buy essentials or for work, how much did you fear of the following—a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?

- Fear of police imposing fine/penalty or confiscating your vehicle?
- Fear of police beating you?
- Fear of police taking you to a hospital for testing?
- Fear of police detaining/arresting you?

In each question, the response options offered to the respondent were 'A lot' 'Somewhat' 'Not Much' 'Not At all'.

Step 1: The response option of 'A lot' was scored as 4, 'Somewhat' was scored as 3, 'Not Much' was scored as 2, 'Not at All' was scored at 1 and those who did not give a response was scored as 0.

Step 2: The scores of all questions were summed up. The summated scores of all questions ranged from 0 to 16.

Step 3: These scores were then distributed across four newly created categories that indicated the intensity of fear from Police.

Score of 0 was labeled as 'No Response', summated scores ranging from 1 to 4 was labeled as 'No Fear', 5 to 8 as 'Not Much Fear', and 9 to 12 were labeled as 'Some Fear' and 13 to 16 were labeled as 'A lot of fear'.

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3

Emerging Issues and Challenges: *Crime, Surveillance, and Law & Order*

A police officer uses an infrared thermometer to measure the temperature of a migrant worker as others wait for their turn after they were stopped at a checkpoint on their way to their homes, during an extended lockdown on the outskirts of Kolkata, India, May 5, 2020.
©REUTERS/Rupak De Chowdhuri.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Three out of four police personnel feel that surveillance increased a lot during the lockdown. A similar proportion of common people also reported an increase in police presence in their locality.
- One out of three police personnel reported being able to follow legal procedures completely while maintaining law and order and investigating crimes during the lockdown.
- The biggest challenge for the police during the lockdown was managing the people, as reported by more than a quarter (27%) of the police personnel. Personnel from Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra reported that managing the poor and the migrant workers was the second biggest challenge for them during the lockdown.
- Overall, the data shows that with fewer people venturing out, there was reportedly a substantial decrease in the crime rate of the country. Four in five police personnel reported a drop in the overall crime rate. A similar proportion of common people also reported a decrease in crime during the lockdown.
- While police personnel reported that crimes such as theft, robbery, kidnapping and murder reduced to a great extent, offences committed in private settings, such as domestic violence against women and cybercrimes, increased during the lockdown. One out of four police personnel reported an increase in domestic violence during the lockdown.

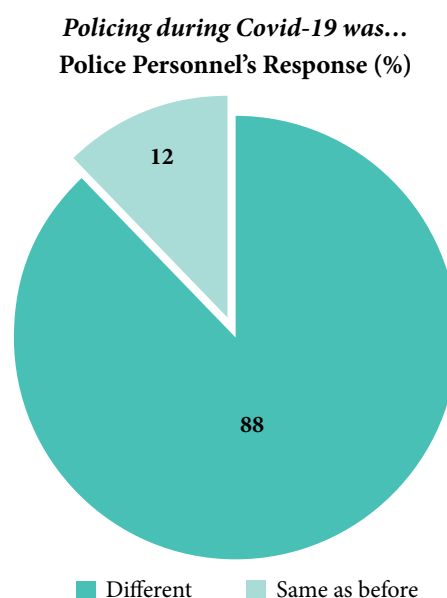
Emerging Issues and Challenges: Crime, Surveillance, and Law & Order

The Covid-19-induced lockdown can be imagined as a dramatic global pause. When it was announced in India, its multi-layered implications were felt across the society, most notably by the police force. It was a watershed moment in the job portfolio of the police, as they were tasked with enforcing the lockdown restrictions. As Indians prepared for home confinement, commercial activities came to a halt, transport was grounded, and traditional police functions were supplemented by new ones. The Indian police had four-hours' notice to enforce a nationwide lockdown in a country of 1.3 billion people. While the routine duties of maintaining law and order, crime control, traffic management etc. continued, police personnel also simultaneously had to ensure that stringent lockdown rules were properly implemented. Unlike in other situations, the police did not have a clear set of standard operating procedures or a clear idea of the expectations they were required to meet regarding Covid-19-related challenges. This further complicated the already uncertain state of affairs. The police were mobilised for a variety of tasks. This included monitoring check-posts and Covid-19 hotspots, ensuring lockdown as well as containment and carrying out a variety of unconventional duties, like creating social awareness, countering fake news, daily inspection of people in isolation or quarantine, assisting the health department in contact-tracing, helping migrant workers and the poor (Khadse et. al, 2020).

This chapter tries to understand how the functioning of the police was affected during the Covid-19-induced nationwide lockdown. The first section looks at the impact of the new expectations from the police on its basic tasks of maintaining law and order, and investigations etc. It highlights that not only did the public health crisis and the subsequent shutdown add to the tasks and workload of the police but also affected their normal functioning. The second section deals with the tasks assigned to the police during the lockdown and the challenges they faced while

performing these functions. About a quarter of the police personnel were assigned the task of ensuring Covid-19 related measures like providing masks, ensuring social distancing, creating awareness, helping the migrant workers, providing basic needs to the people and checking e-passes. The third section looks at the impact of the pandemic on general crime. With fewer people venturing out due to the strict nationwide lockdown, it examines whether certain crimes saw an increase or decrease during this period. The data reveals a mixed picture. The last section brings out the experiences of the common people with the police, and the challenges they faced during the lockdown. It taps into whether their experience with the police was any different as compared to normal times.

Figure 3.1 | Nearly nine out of ten police personnel felt that policing during the lockdown was different from normal policing



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: In your experience, compared to normal times, was the policing during the time of coronavirus outbreak/lockdown any different or was it the same as before?

Note: The study was conducted during the months of October and November in 2020, and therefore, it is confined to the first wave of the Covid-19 and the first phase of the consequential lockdown(s) that were imposed in 2020.

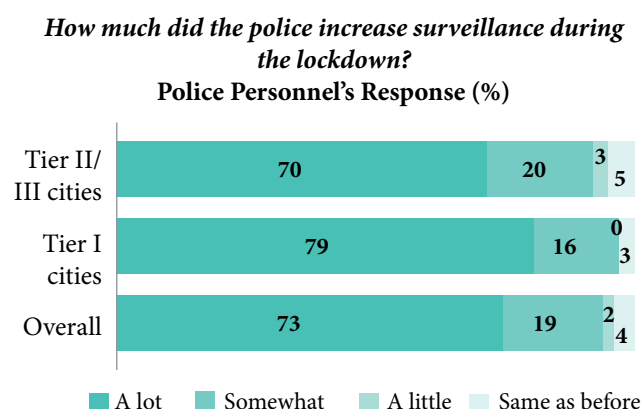
Functioning of the Indian police during Covid-19 and the lockdown

The Covid-19 pandemic created a range of unforeseen challenges for the police personnel, affecting their normal functioning. Nearly nine in 10 police personnel felt that the nature of policing was different during the outbreak, compared to the normal times (Figure 3.1). Personnel from Tier I cities (92%) were more likely to have this opinion as compared to those from Tier II/III cities (85%).

There was an expansion of strict police surveillance during the lockdown, so as to apprehend the violators. With hardly any exception, this was supported by almost all the police personnel interviewed. Bifurcating further, almost three-fourths reported that the surveillance increased a lot while nearly two-fifths reported a somewhat rise in the surveillance (Figure 3.2).

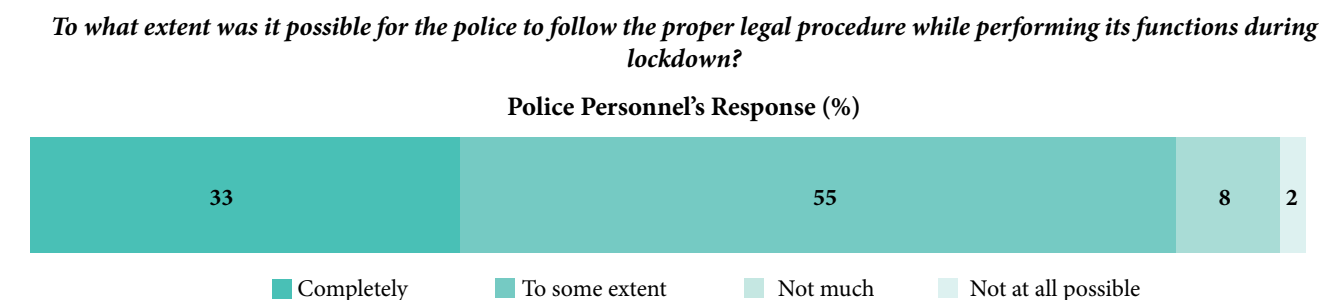
Urban areas, especially mega cities, were the hardest hit by Covid-19, particularly in the first phase. There are four main explanations that link mega cities with Covid-19.

Figure 3.2 | Three out of four personnel report a lot of increase in surveillance during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: Compared to normal times, how much did the police increase surveillance during the lockdown—a lot, somewhat, a little or was it the same as before?

Figure 3.4 | One out of three police personnel reported being able to follow proper legal procedure completely during lockdown

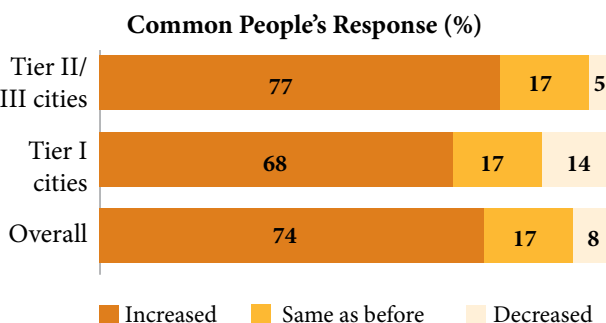


Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: In your experience, to what extent was it possible for the police to follow the proper legal procedure while maintaining law and order or investigating crimes when the lockdown was in place – completely, to some extent, not much or not at all possible?

These are density and social interaction; connectivity; crowded living conditions; and exposed occupations (*The Economics Observer*, 2020). The personnel in Tier I cities were more likely to report that the police surveillance increased a lot in their cities compared to their counterparts in Tier II and III cities.

Figure 3.3 | Three out of four people report an increased police presence in their locality during the lockdown

Did the presence of police increase or decrease in your locality?



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: According to you, when the lockdown was in place, did the presence of police increase or decrease in your locality?

Not only did the police personnel state that there was an increase in police surveillance during the lockdown, but close to three-fourths of the citizens also felt that the presence of police had increased during the lockdown. Less than two in 10 citizens felt that Covid-19 did not make much of a difference to the police presence in their locality (Figure 3.3).

People in most states felt that the police presence in their locality increased during the lockdown. People from Karnataka were most likely to report this, with close to nine in 10 people feeling that the police presence in their locality had increased. This was followed by Andhra Pradesh (90%) and Maharashtra (87%). There were a few states where a notable percentage of people reported that the lockdown

made no difference to the presence of police (Delhi 39%, Uttar Pradesh 23%, Kerala 23% and West Bengal 22%).

During the outbreak, the police were tasked with different kinds of jobs ranging from enforcing the lockdown, contact tracing, managing check-points, providing security at high-risk zones, hospitals and quarantine centres, to name a few. More importantly, they were also expected to allay people's fears about the coronavirus (Pandey, 2020). With so much on their plate, only one third (33%) of the police personnel reported that it was completely possible for them to follow proper legal procedure while maintaining law and order and investigating crimes during the lockdown. A majority reported it being possible only to 'some extent', while one in 10 reported that it was extremely difficult to follow proper legal procedures during this period (Figure 3.4).

A combination of their inability to follow legal procedures and lack of clearly defined roles and duties, perhaps, led to a high possibility of the police personnel using their discretion while tackling unusual situations created by the pandemic and the lockdown. A study by the Criminal Justice and Police Accountability (CJPA) Project found that in Madhya Pradesh, the police used wide discretion while arresting people for violation of lockdown rules. Nearly 60 percent of the FIRs studied provided inadequate or no factual information on why the police officer made the judgment of accusing individuals, confiscating their assets or arresting them (CJPA Project, 2021).

Predictably, the lockdown significantly affected the normal functioning (maintaining law and order, investigating crimes etc.) of the police. Both civilians and the police personnel concurred with this view in the survey, with police

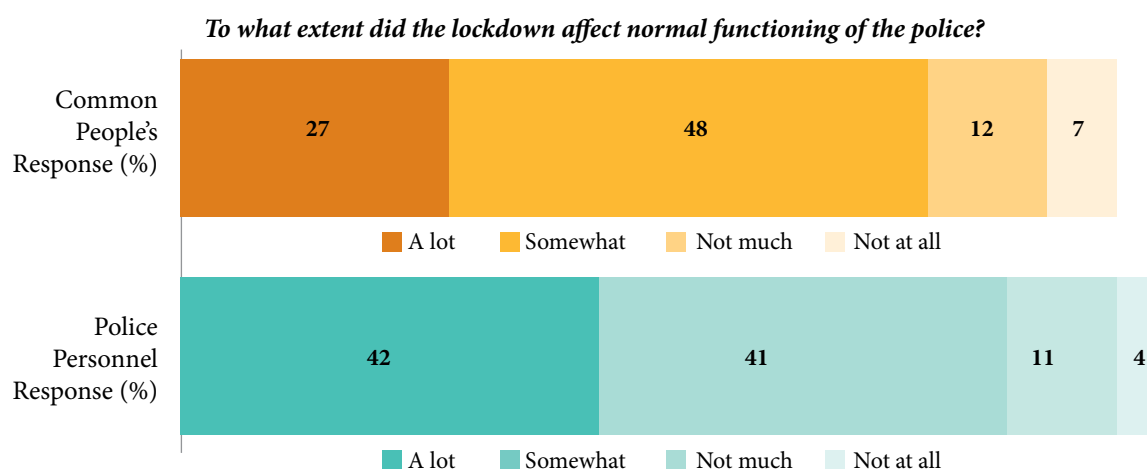
personnel having a stronger opinion on the same. Among the police personnel, more than two-fifths felt that the lockdown had a serious impact on their daily work. Almost the same proportion felt that it affected their normal functioning somewhat. For only about one in seven police personnel (15%), the impact was minimal or none at all. The general public also seemed to be aware of how the lockdown had an impact on the normal functioning of the police personnel. Three-quarters of civilians (75%) stated that the lockdown affected the normal functioning of the police. Of this, a little over one fourth (27%) believed the impact to be significant (Figure 3.5).

Tasks assigned and the challenges faced by the police during Covid-19 and the lockdown

The many lockdowns in the country, highly restrictive in nature, brought the police personnel in regular contact with citizens requiring assistance. They were also at the forefront of the country's public health campaign and were expected to spread awareness and provide essential supplies to the people. All this added to the burden on an already resource-starved police. India's police to population ratio is 193 to 100,000 which is much lower than in other countries (Mangla and Kapoor, 2020) and as per the latest official statistics from the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), the Indian police force functions with around 20 percent vacancy.

India's public health response to Covid-19 involved two distinct police functions: the maintenance of public order and social service provisioning. Hence, enforcing a lockdown has been a whole new ball game, for which the Indian police was neither well equipped nor trained. With all the other existing responsibilities of the police, preventing

Figure 3.5 | Four out of five police personnel reported that the lockdown affected normal functioning of the police



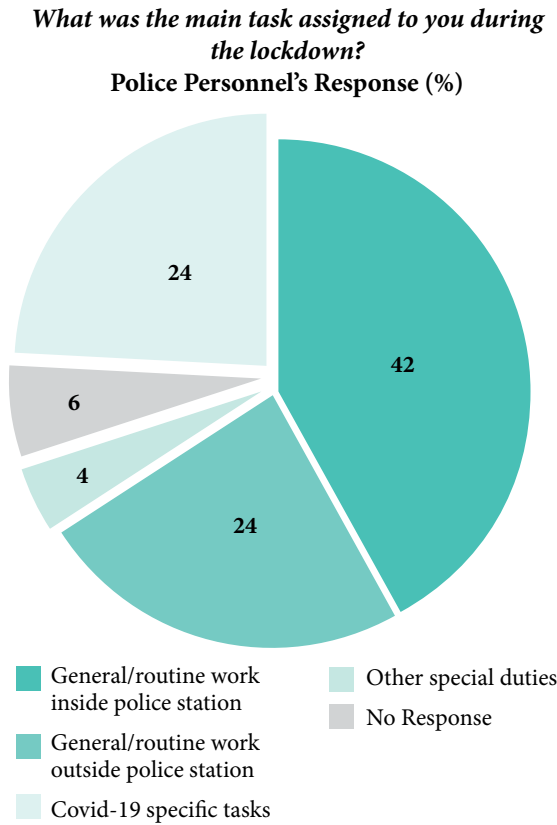
Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: How much did the lockdown affect the normal functioning of the police, like maintaining law and order or investigating crimes etc.--a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?

the spread of the contagion was an additional task in their work portfolio without any systematic training.

The police personnel were asked about the main task assigned to them during the lockdown. A quarter of them claimed that they were tasked to ensure Covid-19 safety measures, like providing masks, ensuring social distancing, creating awareness, helping the migrants, providing basic needs to the people and checking e-passes. More than two-fifths (42%) of the police personnel reported doing field-based tasks and about one-fourth (24%) reported doing general/routine work inside the police station (Figure 3.6). Among the 42 percent who were involved in field-based duty, doing assigned jobs outside the police station, patrolling (12%) and maintaining law and order (11%) were two of the most reported activities.

Figure 3.6 | One out of four personnel reported being tasked with pandemic-specific duties during the lockdown



Note: All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: What was the main task assigned to you during the lockdown?

There is no doubt that the extent of exposure was very high for the police personnel as they were amongst the primary responders to people's needs during the lockdown. In the following section, we try to assess which police personnel were more likely to be allotted Covid-specific tasks.

If we look at just Covid-related tasks, we find that female personnel were less likely to be allotted these tasks, com-

pared to their male counterparts. The data also reveals that the older police personnel were less likely to be assigned Covid-specific tasks, compared to the younger ones. However, those with greater experience in service were more likely to be allotted these tasks (Table 3.1). Among the states, close to one in two reported carrying out Covid-related tasks in Bihar —the highest among all the states surveyed. This was followed by Tamil Nadu and Kerala (33% each). The lowest Covid-related deployment was in Andhra Pradesh where only 10 percent of the police personnel reported that they were assigned Covid-related tasks.

About two thirds (65%) of the police personnel stated that their families lived with them. Additionally, among the 65 percent of the police personnel whose families lived with them, close to three in five (67%) reported that there was a family member vulnerable to contracting Covid (children, a pregnant woman, an old person and/or someone with prolonged illness).

Table 3.1 | Younger male police personnel with more than 10 years of work experience most likely to be assigned Covid-specific duties

Profile of police personnel	Police personnel assigned the task of Covid-specific activities (%)
Overall	25
Less than 5 years of work experience	23
5-9 years of work experience	23
10 years and above of work experience	26
Police-men	25
Police-women	21
18-29 years old	24
30-39 years old	26
40-49 years old	24
50 years old and above	20
Police personnel not living with families	27
Police personnel living with families	23

Note: Rest of the respondents stated they were involved in activities other than those related to Covid-19 or did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: How much did the lockdown affect the normal functioning of the police, like maintaining law and order or investigating crimes etc. – a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?

Analysing the data further, we noticed that although a majority (64%) of personnel assigned Covid-specific tasks

were provided some special training on public dealings during a pandemic, there was a significant proportion who were not provided any such training (36%). (For more on training, see Chapter 4)

The additional tasks proved to be challenging for the police during the pandemic. A major struggle for them was managing the public during the lockdown (*Figure 3.7*). One in four (27%) police personnel stated this to be the biggest hurdle. For one in five police personnel, the biggest problem was ensuring the safety and security of citizens against Covid-19. This included creating public awareness and encouraging them to use masks and sanitizers, ensuring social distancing, managing home isolation of Covid patients and admitting such patients in hospitals. As the police were responsible for a range of tasks during the lockdown, close to one in every five police personnel feared that they or their families will be infected. The issue of migrants and providing help to them was a major concern only for eight percent of the police personnel.

Ensuring the safety and security of the citizens against Covid-19 was the biggest hurdle faced by the police in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal (*Table 3.2*). For police in Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi, the biggest difficulty was managing the public during the lockdown. Police personnel in Karnataka reported increased health risks to themselves as the biggest

hurdle. Police in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra reported that the problems of the poor and migrants were the second biggest problem they faced (*Table 3.2*).

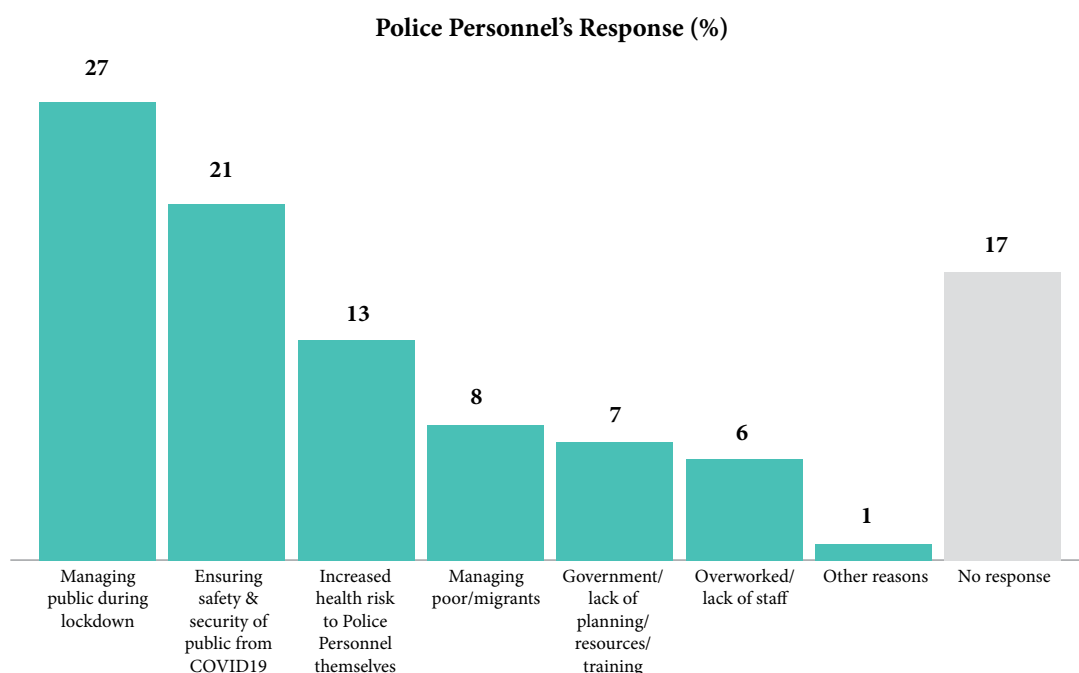
Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on crime rate

It was believed that the introduction of social distancing and lockdowns would have a dramatic effect on crimes. Farrell and Tilley (2020), in their work on how crime changes during a lockdown, suggest that the lockdown not only results in a change in the way people live but also on how crime occurs. The authors suggest that new offences too emerge in the lockdown. Similarly, data reported by the New York Police Department showed that there is variance in increase or decrease depending on the type of crime (Bump. 2020; Mohler et al. 2020).

Overall, the Indian data collected from face to face surveys in 10 states shows that with fewer people venturing out, there was a substantial decrease in the reported crime rate of the country. However, this data needs to be read with a caveat. It is not country-wide official data provided by the government. Rather, it has been generated based on the accounts of police personnel surveyed in the sampled cities.

The data reveals that an overwhelming proportion of police personnel (79%) reported a drop in the overall crime rate. A little over one in 10 police personnel (12%) report-

Figure 3.7 | Managing the public during the lockdown was the biggest challenge for the police during the period



Note: All figures are rounded off. This is the opinion of the police personnel.

Question asked: According to you, what was the biggest hurdle/difficulty for the police while handling coronavirus pandemic during the lockdown?

Table 3.2 | State-wise breakup of difficulties faced by the police during the lockdown

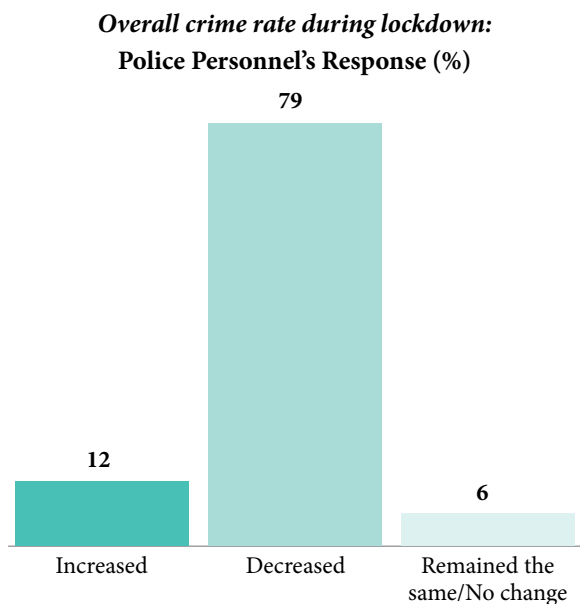
States	Police Personnel's Response	
	Biggest difficulty	Second biggest difficulty
Andhra Pradesh	Ensuring safety & security of public from Covid-19	Managing poor/migrants
Bihar	Ensuring safety & security of public from Covid-19	Managing public during lockdown
Gujarat	Managing public during lockdown	Ensuring safety & security of public from Covid-19
Karnataka	Increased health risk to police personnel themselves	Managing public during lockdown
Kerala	Managing public during lockdown	Ensuring safety & security of public from Covid-19
Maharashtra	Ensuring safety & security of public from Covid-19	Managing poor/migrants
Tamil Nadu	Managing public during lockdown	Government/lack of planning/resources/training
Uttar Pradesh	Managing public during lockdown	Ensuring safety & security of public from Covid-19
West Bengal	Ensuring safety & security of public from Covid-19	Managing public during lockdown
Delhi	Managing public during lockdown	Increased health risk to police personnel themselves

Note: Only those categories have been reported where the prevalence of these activities was highest compared to others in different states.

Question asked: According to you, what was the biggest hurdle/difficulty for the police while handling coronavirus pandemic during the lockdown?

ed an increase in the crime whereas six percent reported that there was not much of a difference in the crime rate during the lockdown (Figure 3.8).

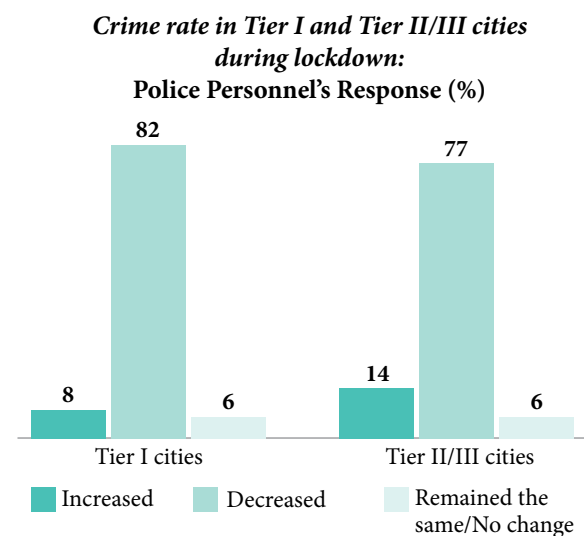
Figure 3.8 | Four out of five police personnel report a decrease in the overall crimes during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: Some regions saw a decline in crime rate during lockdown, compared to earlier. What about your region? Did the overall crime rate increase or decrease when lockdown was in place?

Figure 3.9 | Police personnel in both Tier I and Tier II/III cities reported that crime in their areas decreased during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: Some regions saw a decline in crime rate during lockdown, compared to earlier. What about your region? Did the overall crime rate increase or decrease when lockdown was in place?

Police personnel in both Tier I and Tier II/III cities reported that crime in their areas decreased during the lockdown (Figure 3.9). However, if we look at police personnel reporting crime rate increase in both types of cities, those in Tier II cities were more likely to have this perception. In Tier I cities, eight percent police personnel reported an

increase in the crime rate, compared to 14 percent in Tier II/III cities. Uttar Pradesh (26%) followed by Karnataka (19%) and West Bengal (18%) were the top three states where police reported an increase in overall crime. On the other hand, the sharpest dip in crime was reported by police in the southern states of Tamil Nadu (97%), Kerala (96%) and Andhra Pradesh (83%).

The data reveals that while general crimes such as theft, robbery, kidnapping and murder seemed to have reduced significantly during the lockdown, cases of domestic violence against women and incidents related to cybercrime increased (Figure 3.10). Police personnel reported a sharp decline in general crime like theft, robbery, kidnapping and murder, with four out of five (81%) reporting the same. Close to three in four of the police personnel also reported a decline in number of FIRs¹ registered in their police stations (78%). More than six in 10 police personnel said that illegal trade of alcohol and tobacco products saw a decline during the lockdown. However, a notable 17 percent also reported an increase in the same.

Conversely, offences committed in private settings such as domestic violence and cybercrime seem to have risen

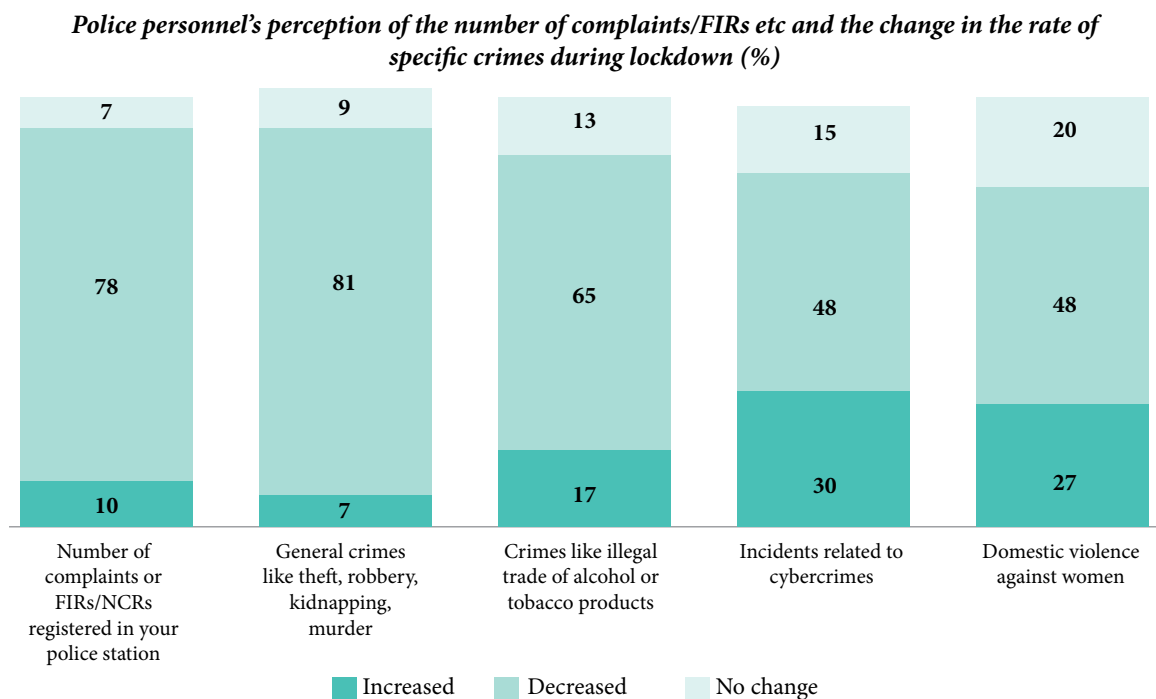
during the pandemic. More than four out of five police personnel reported that there was a spike in the incidents related to cybercrime (30%) and domestic violence against women (27%). An analysis of complaints received by the National Commission for Women (NCW) in May 2020 also revealed that there was a significant increase in domestic violence and cybercrime complaints in the districts that saw the strictest lockdown measures (red zones)² relative to districts that saw the least strict measures (green zones) (Bhattacharya 2020). However, sexual assault complaints as well as complaints against rape fell, consistent with decreased mobility in public spaces, public transport, and workplaces. Peterman et al. (2020) in their study suggest how crises and times of unrest have been linked to increased interpersonal violence, including incidence of violence against women and children. (Table 3.3)

Almost an equal proportion of police personnel in Tier I and Tier II/III cities reported an increase in all the above crimes. However, when it came to reporting decrease in crime, barring domestic violence against women (where police personnel in Tier II compared to those in Tier I cities reported greater decline), police personnel in Tier I cities disclosed a greater dip. Additionally, across all the cities, the biggest drop was seen in general crimes like theft,

1 FIRs refers to First Information Reports prepared by police personnel when they receive information about the commission of a cognizable offence. FIRs are registered by police personnel as per Section 154 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973.

2 The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had classified country's districts in three zones—Red, Orange and Green—based on the severity of the Covid-19 outbreak in those areas.

Figure 3.10 | Twenty-seven percent police personnel report an increase in domestic violence and 30 percent report an increase in cybercrimes during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: Compared to earlier times, did the following things increase or decrease during the lockdown? a. Number of complaints or FIR/NCRs registered in your police station b. General crimes like theft, robbery, kidnapping, murder? c. Crimes like illegal trade of alcohol or tobacco products? d. Incidents related to cybercrimes? e. Incidents of domestic violence against women?

Table 3.3 | Police personnel from Tier I cities are more likely to report a decrease in overall crime compared to Tier II cities, except in cases of domestic violence

Police personnel's perception of the number of complaints/FIRs etc and the change in the rate of specific crimes during lockdown (%)	Increased		Decreased		No Change	
	Tier I	Tier II/ III	Tier I	Tier II/ III	Tier I	Tier II/ III
Number of complaints or FIRs/NCRs registered in your police station	9	10	80	77	4	8
General crimes like theft, robbery, kidnapping, murder	7	6	85	79	4	12
Crimes like illegal trade of alcohol or tobacco products	15	18	69	63	11	14
Incidents related to cybercrimes	31	30	49	47	11	17
Domestic violence against women	27	27	46	49	21	19

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: Compared to earlier times, did the following things increase or decrease during the lockdown: a. Number of complaints or FIR/NCRs registered in your police station? b. General crimes like theft, robbery, kidnapping, murder? c. Crimes like illegal trade of alcohol or tobacco products? d. Incidents related to cybercrimes? e. Incidences of domestic violence against women?

robbery, kidnapping, murder, followed by illegal trade of alcohol/tobacco products (Table 3.3).

Police personnel in Uttar Pradesh (19%) followed by Kerala (18%) reported the greatest increase in number of complaints or FIRs/NCRs³ registered in their police station. The greatest rise in cases like theft, robbery, kidnapping and murder, was reported by the police personnel in West Bengal (25%) followed by Karnataka (13%). The shutting of shops during the lockdown resulted in illegal traders (of alcohol and tobacco) gaining a foothold. The top states which reported illegal trading of these products were Tamil Nadu (25%), Andhra Pradesh and Delhi (23% each). The extreme lockdown measures were also accompanied with a dramatic rise in cybercrime. This was prevalent in some states more than others. Uttar Pradesh (54%), followed by Tamil Nadu and Delhi (51% each), saw more than half the police personnel reporting a rise in such crimes. The online surfing related to the pandemic has proved to be fertile ground for cyber criminals. This problem was so unprecedented that international organisations like the Interpol and the WHO were releasing alerts and bulletins for the general public on Covid-19 cyber threats. These were linked with online scams, phishing and disruptive malware, which at times included the dreaded ransomware (Sreedhar, 2020). With respect to incidents of domestic violence during the lockdown, the highest increase was reported by the police in Maharashtra, where six in 10 personnel reported a rise (60%). This was followed by Uttar Pradesh where half the police reported a rise (50%), and Delhi (43%).

³ NCRs refer to Non-Cognizable Reports filed by the police for the commission of non-cognizable offences, or offences in which the police does not have the authority to arrest without a warrant. NCRs are filed as per Section 155 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973.

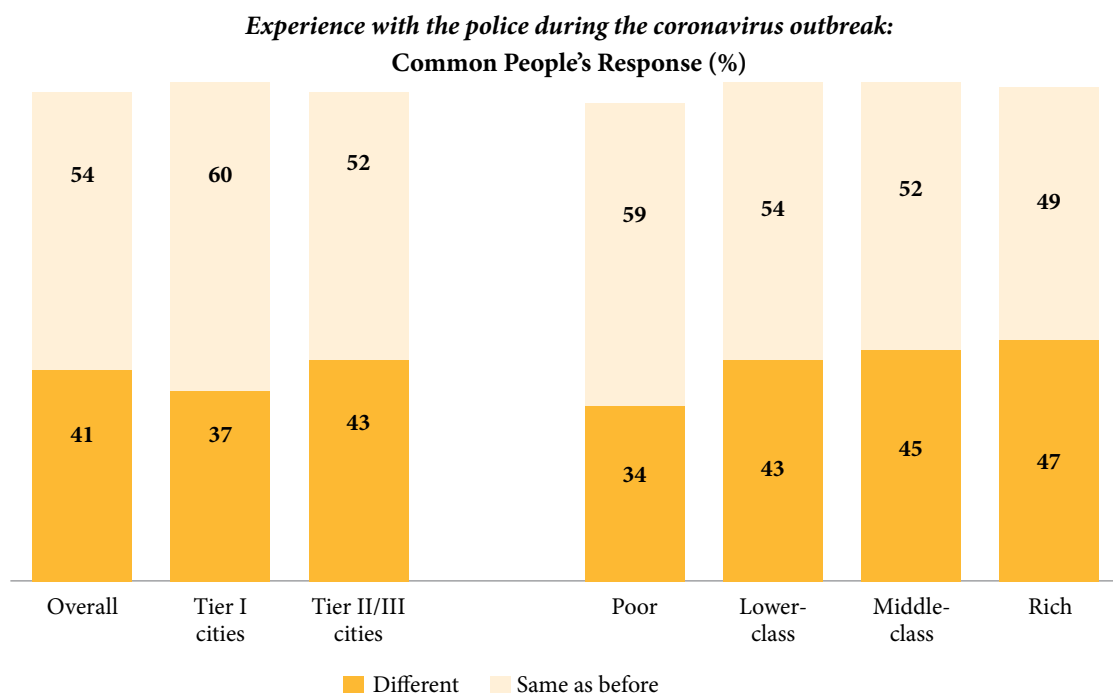
Experience and challenges faced by people during lockdown

As the work and duties of the police personnel expanded and transformed due to Covid-19, the police were performing functions other than their routine duties. Given this context, the study captured a mixed opinion of the common people regarding their experience with the police during the lockdown. A majority (54%) of the common people stated that their experience with the police remained unchanged. However, close to two in five persons felt that their experience was different post-Covid and the subsequent lockdowns. On delving further, one noticed that the poor, in comparison to the rich, and those in Tier I cities, as compared to Tier II/III cities, were more likely to report that the behaviour of the police was same as before (Figure 3.11).

Among the 41 percent of people who had a different experience with the police, as compared to normal times, 61 percent did not respond explaining how their experience was different. One in every 10 persons (11%) felt that the police were stricter, protective and took more safety measures. Five percent reported more visibility and patrolling as distinguishing features of the police during the lockdown. Eight percent reported that their experience with the police was very bad and 15 percent reported that they had a good experience with the police during the lockdown.

Merely six percent of the people reported approaching the police either by visiting the police station or via phone during the lockdown (Figure 3.12). Among these, close to three-fourths did not disclose the reason for the same (74%) and 15 percent approached the police owing to Covid-related issues.

Figure 3.11 | Two out of five people reported that they had a different experience with the police during the lockdown compared to earlier

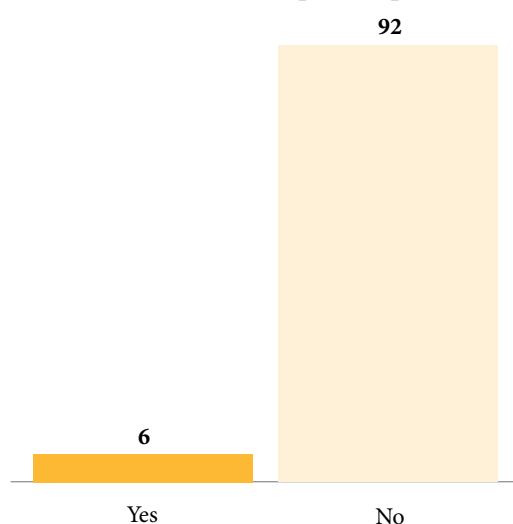


Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: Compared to normal times, was your experience with the police during the time of coronavirus outbreak/lockdown any different or was it the same as before?

Figure 3.12 | Nine out of 10 people did not visit a police station or contact the police via phone during the lockdown

**Did you visit a police station or contact police via phone?
Common People's Response (%)**



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

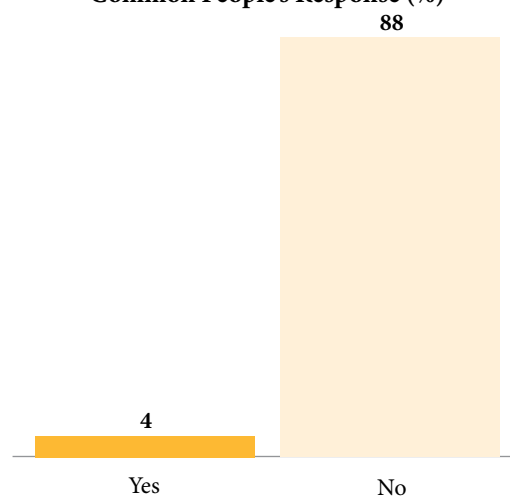
Question asked: When the lockdown was in place, did you visit a police station or contact police via phone?

On the other hand, a vast majority of the common people, 92 percent, reported not approaching the police at all during the lockdown, either in person or telephonically. However, for a similar proportion of the people, such a situation also did not arise where they needed to approach the police during the lockdown but avoided it (Figure 3.13).

A majority (88%) of the respondents did not face any situation during the lockdown where they needed to seek help from police but avoided it. Only four percent said that they encountered such a situation but did not approach the police (Figure 3.13).

Figure 3.13 | Close to nine out of 10 people did not face a situation during the lockdown where they needed to contact the police but avoided it

**Did you also encounter a situation where you needed to seek the help of police but you avoided that?
Common People's Response (%)**



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: When lockdown was in place, did you also encounter a situation where you needed to seek the help of police but you avoided that?

Conclusion

As the coronavirus started to proliferate across the country, the uncertainty of the lockdown gripped every soul. The police, one of the foremost frontline workers, were left to take care of a mammoth logistical nightmare accompanying the absolute closure of a nation of more than 1.37 billion. This chapter demonstrates the various issues and challenges faced by the police as a result of Covid-19 pandemic. Like every paralysing lockdown in different corners of the globe, the implementation was key. Thus, police personnel from various parts of the country were deputed, while having to shoulder extraordinary responsibilities. Not surprisingly, they were neither trained nor well equipped to take on tasks of such abrupt and assorted nature. These new duties ranged from checking the movement of people, patrolling, ensuring social distancing, and creating awareness to helping migrant people, providing basic amenities to citizens and, checking e-passes. They were also responsible for daily inspection of people in isolation or quarantine, assisting the health department in contact tracing activities and helping people in need. Simultaneously their law and order maintenance and crime control duties were not given a miss. All this resulted in significant increase and presence of police during the lockdown. Police personnel in the data highlighted reflect how policing in these times was unusual and different. This had a significant impact on their normal functioning.

Covid-19 not only disrupted the normal functioning of the police but also brought about a dramatic change in prevalent crimes in the country. Crimes such as theft, robbery, kidnapping and murder saw a decline but offences committed in private settings such as domestic violence and cybercrimes witnessed swelling numbers during the pandemic.

Common people had a mixed opinion on their experience with the police during the Covid outbreak. While the majority of civilians stated that their experience with the police was similar to what it was before the lockdown, a few felt that their experience was different post-Covid and the subsequent lockdowns. However, the majority of civilians reported that the presence of police increased significantly during the lockdown. They also reported that the police were stricter, more visible and concerned about safety measures to protect the citizens. Though the majority of common people did not approach the police but those who did were mostly satisfied with the help provided to them. It was significant that a large number of police personnel in almost all states reported their inability to follow the law (legal procedures) completely. This, combined with the lack of clarity about their changed roles and duties or lack of specific training or SOPs to tackle the unprecedented

crisis could have led to an increased use of discretion by the personnel on the ground. This can explain at least partly the fact that at many places they let off the violators of the lockdown with or without a minor punishment while handing out much harsher punishment for the same offences at other places. Overall, a majority of both the common people as well as police personnel agree that policing during the first wave of the lockdown was different from normal policing and general policing tasks such as maintaining law and order and investigating crimes suffered due to the lockdown.

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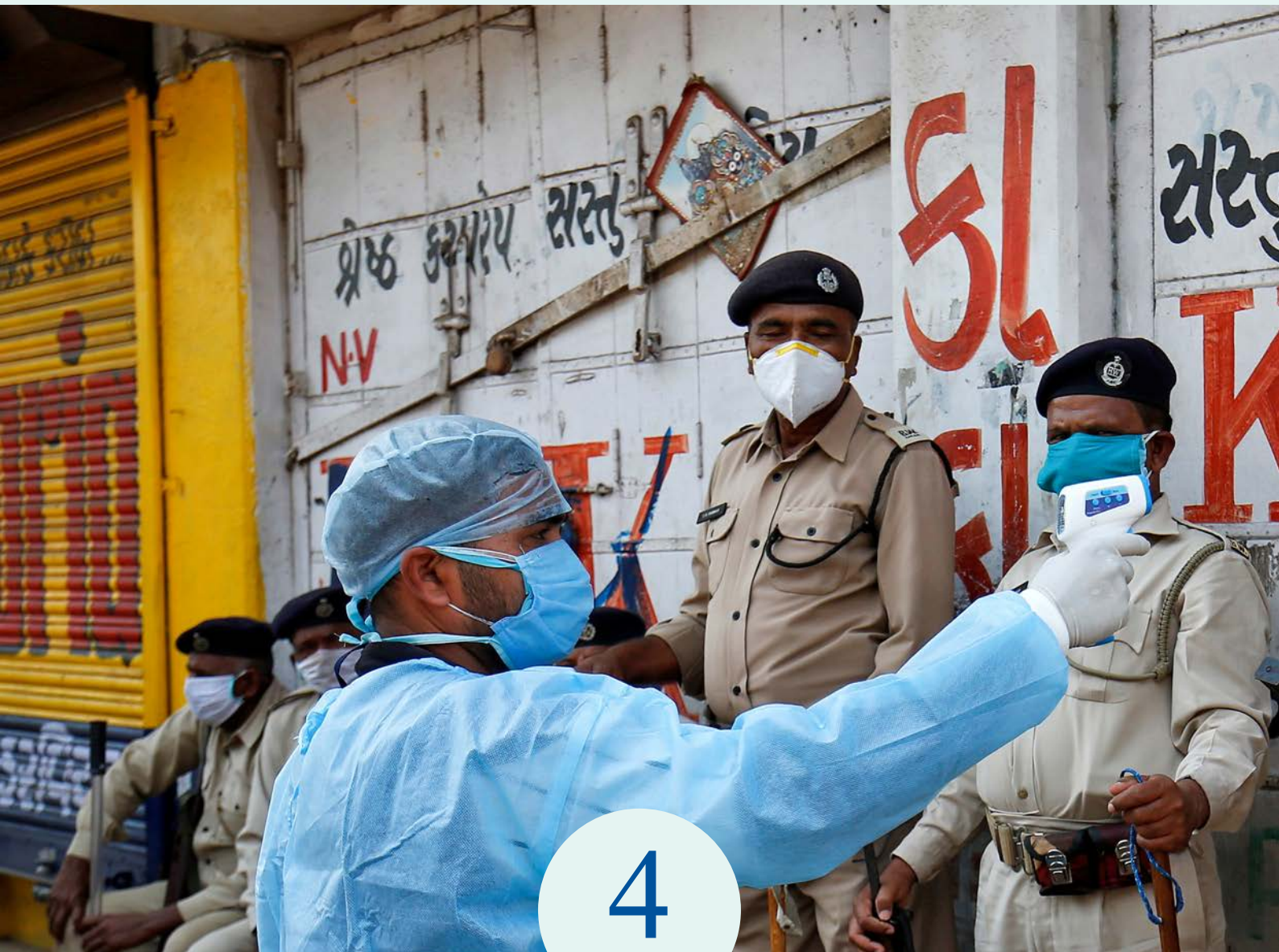
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Changing Roles and Working Conditions of the Police

A paramedic uses an infrared thermometer to measure the temperatures of police personnel alongside a road during the first nationwide lockdown in Ahmedabad, India, April 9, 2020. ©REUTERS/Amit Dave.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- An overwhelming majority (64%) of common people believed that the police were following Covid-19 protocol properly and taking all precautions while on duty. However, one in three had a dissenting opinion.
- A majority (56%) reported that the vulnerable police personnel were shifted to low-risk zones or given complete rest, while two in five (37%) denied the same, indicating the lack of a uniform policy. However, more than four out of five (84%) agreed that police personnel with visible symptoms of Covid-19 were granted leave.
- Personnel in Tier I cities were provided with better facilities during the lockdown compared to those in Tier II/III cities, with higher provision of equipment for duty during the pandemic, better hygiene conditions, more insurance covers, safety arrangements such as special accommodation, higher proportion of personnel receiving special training and more departmentally arranged health check-ups during the lockdown. Personnel from Tier-I cities with co-morbidities were also less likely to be posted in high-risk zones.
- Half of the police personnel (56%) claimed to have received a special training to deal with the public during the outbreak, while more than two in five (43%) disagreed.
- In general, southern states such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu were more proactive in providing special training to personnel during the pandemic, as well as ensuring better availability of safety equipment such as PPE kits, etc. while states such as Bihar and West Bengal were least prepared under these parameters. Highlighting the challenges, half of the police personnel (52%) identified shortage of staff as a major hurdle. Consequently, the police force appeared to be overburdened, with four in five (78%) reporting to be working for at least 11 hours a day during the lockdown. More than a quarter (27%) reportedly worked for at least 15 hours a day during the lockdown.
- Nearly one out of four personnel (23%) reported confusion as to who would shelter the migrant workers while another 22 percent noted a lack of coordination with the district police.

Changing Roles and Working Conditions of the Police

During the Covid-19 outbreak, the police force was arguably only second in line (after health professionals), in dealing with the greatest health risks emerging from the disease and to stop its uninhibited spread. While a large number of professionals could shift their jobs to their homes during the onset of the pandemic, the police worked in public spaces, working hard to bring a sense of normalcy into the lives of others, often at great risk to themselves and their families.

With the additional responsibility of managing the lockdown, the public-police interface was predictably fractious. The nature of the infection was such that a large number of police personnel in the more affected states also contracted the virus while on duty. Unfortunately, a large number of police personnel also died in their line of duty. The element of uncertainty and their changed work profile altered the nature of their interaction with the general public, resulting in some fundamental changes in policing during the lockdown. The challenge was dual—on the one hand, the police force itself needed to be protected, especially those at the front line, and on the other, the police had to push their efforts to curb the spread of the virus. Some of the newer facets of police duty that emerged included novel, contactless methods of work, differentiation in the vulnerability of the workforce and the resultant safety norms as well as adoption of precautions. Detailed lists of provisions and preparedness to deal with unexpected confusions and obstacles had to be drawn up by the police force. There was a special focus on police personnel deployed in sensitive and contagious zones. Besides facing concerns about protecting the public and themselves, those on field duty also needed to protect their families after returning home. This raised questions about the availability of special arrangements and basic but essential equipment like masks and sanitisers for police personnel deployed in high risk zones

during the Covid-19 outbreak. The present chapter takes into account some important factors to understand how the working conditions of police personnel played out in some of the most infected cities and states in India.

Protocol in dealing with the pandemic

Following the Covid-19 protocol

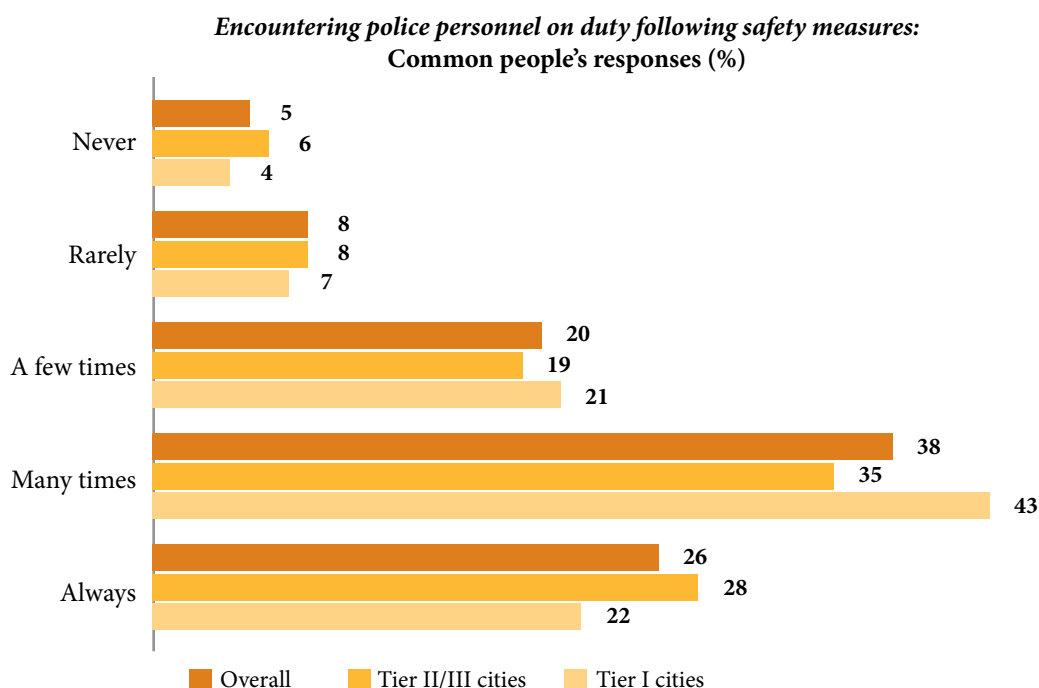
The routine terms of engagement between the public and the police changed dramatically during the course of the lockdown necessitated by the pandemic. The prevention of Covid-19 mandated that health protocols be followed uniformly in a country as large as India. The onus of high levels of discipline was placed on health workers, sanitation workers, and police personnel. Hence, the public perception on how well the police personnel observed caution during the lockdown is significant in making sense of their role during the pandemic.

Perceptions differed on how often the police personnel were careful in following safety measures while dealing with the public. The big picture is that an overwhelming majority (64%) believed that the police were following Covid-19 protocol—a quarter (26%) felt that the police personnel were always careful, and four of every 10 (38%) believed that that they were mostly careful. However, one-third of the citizens have a dissenting opinion—one in every five people felt that they were usually not careful, while close to one of every 10 (14%) thought that they were rarely or never careful (*Figure 4.1*).

Further, in Tier II and III cities, there was a greater likelihood of people saying that police personnel were always careful (28%) in dealing with the pandemic, as compared to the Tier I cities (22%) (*Figure 4.1*).

Note: The study was conducted during the months of October and November in 2020, and therefore, it is confined to the first wave of the Covid-19 and the first phase of the consequential lockdown(s) that were imposed in 2020.

Figure 4.1 | According to two out of three people, police were usually following safety measures during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: During coronavirus outbreak, how often did you encounter police personnel following proper safety measures while dealing with public--always, many times, a few times, rarely or never?

Use of contactless methods

To enforce robust disease mitigation strategies, the new dynamics of the police-public interaction gave rise to new concerns, often not taken very seriously in 'normal' times. This included contactless methods of interaction and a higher focus on hygiene. The technology used included sensor-based sanitisation machines, thermal cameras to reflect body temperature and other indicators, video-intercom devices to minimise physical interaction, and UV disinfection boxes to disinfect surfaces. We asked police personnel whether such technologies were installed or used in their respective police stations.

The installation of thermal cameras and sensor-based sanitisation machine in police stations was particularly prevalent, as reported by most personnel interviewed. Around three-fourths of the police personnel reported that their respective police stations had the above two devices installed. However, the other two contraptions — UV disinfection boxes and the video intercom devices, were not as common. While about two-fifths of the police personnel claimed to have the UV disinfection boxes in their police stations, about one-third claimed their police stations had video-intercom devices. Going by the responses of the police personnel, police stations in the mega Tier I cities were far more likely to have used such contactless methods. As high as nine in 10 police personnel in Tier I cities con-

firmed having thermal cameras and sensor-based sanitisation machines installed in their stations, whereas this proportion was between sixty and seventy in the Tier II and III cities. Notably, the Tier I cities were more burdened, and recorded higher Covid-19 cases (Figure 4.2).

Hygiene conditions

The overall concern of people for hygiene expanded manifold during the outbreak. Contributing to this awareness were various guidelines from international and national organisations and by the government, emphasising personal and general hygiene. The guidelines underscored how prevention is the best way forward, and laid emphasis on spreading awareness among concerned individuals who were put on duty amidst a rapid virus surge.

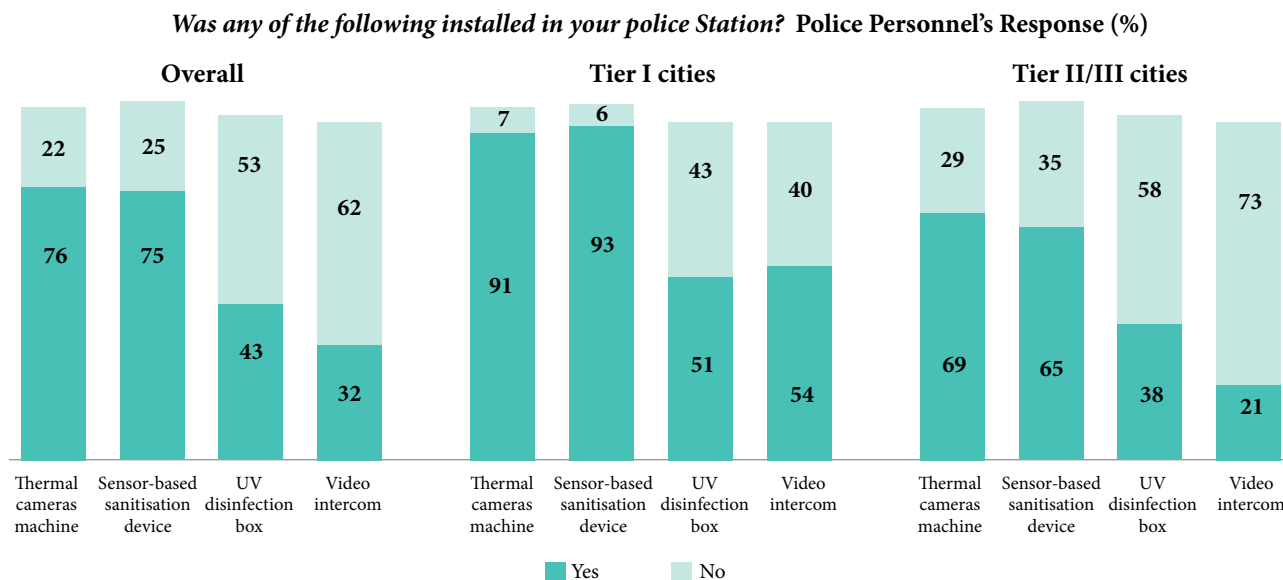
During the pandemic, the maintenance of hygiene in police stations was considered most crucial in order to ensure safety of those at the frontline. On being asked about the hygiene conditions of the police stations, a majority of the police personnel rated the hygiene of their respective stations to be very good (54%). Another four in 10 (42%) rated it to be good, indicating a very satisfactory state of affairs in the context of hygiene at police stations. Between Tier I and Tier II/III cities, the former fared better, with six in 10 of the police personnel rating the hygiene conditions to be 'very good,' as against five in 10 in the latter (Figure 4.3).

Provisions for vulnerable police personnel

The elderly as well as individuals with co-morbidities were more vulnerable to the lethal virus. Table 4.1 outlines whether the police force had shown concern for their more vulnerable members by deploying them in low-risk areas,

assigning them more in-house tasks or giving them complete rest. It should, however, be mentioned that young and healthy people are not insulated from the debilitating impact of the virus, as it has harmed all age-groups. Many young people with no co-morbidities have also died across

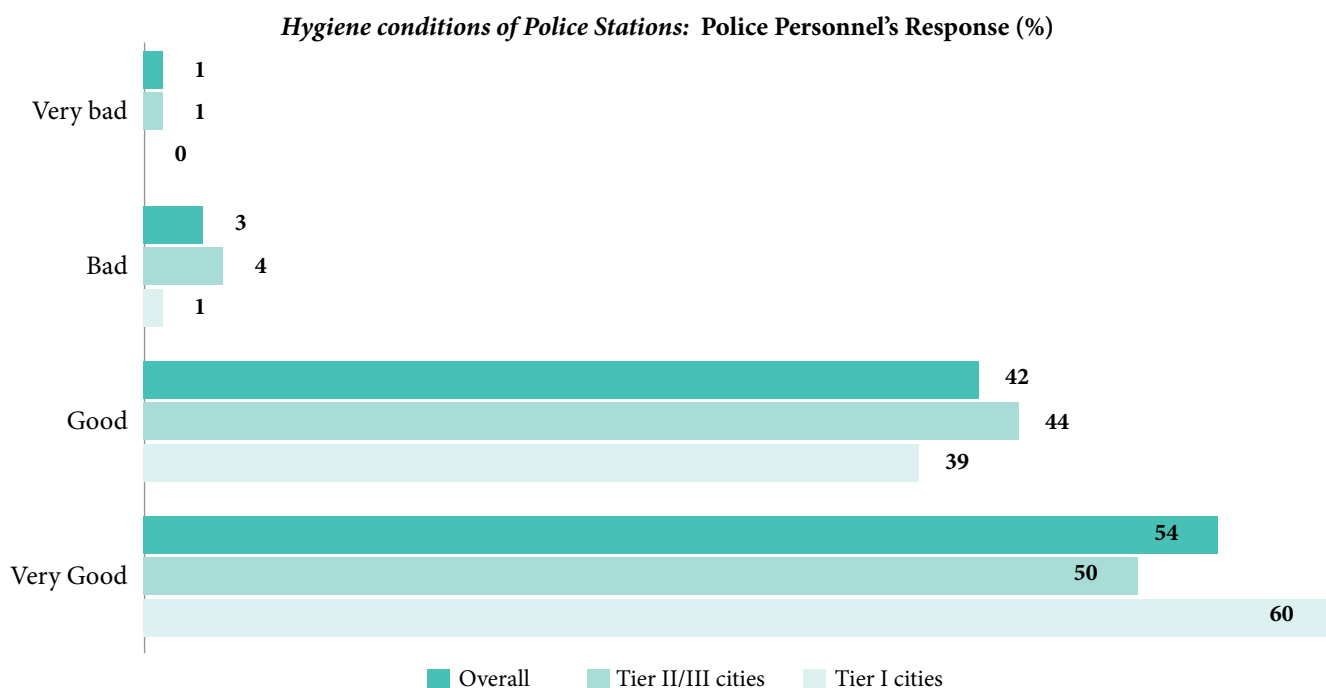
Figure 4.2 | Police in Tier I cities far more likely to have used contactless methods than in Tier II cities



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: During coronavirus outbreak, police adopted many contactless methods to protect its force from the virus. Was any of the following installed in your police Station- a. Sensor-based sanitisation machine; b. Thermal cameras; c. Video-intercom device; d. UV disinfection box?

Figure 4.3 | Hygiene conditions of police stations and police vehicles rated high by a majority of the police personnel, more so in Tier I cities



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: How do you rate the cleanliness and hygiene conditions of police Stations and police Vehicles during last few months - very good, good, bad, or very bad?

the world, but the frequency of severe infections has still been higher among older populations. This led to governmental and other health bodies to issue guidelines that advocate for the exercise of greater caution by elderly people and those with comorbidities on duty.

The survey found that about a quarter of the police personnel (23%) suffered from pre-existing ailments/chronic conditions like respiratory disorder, cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, diabetes and others. The risk of contracting the disease was higher among such police personnel. It may reasonably be assumed that precautions on the part of both the personnel and department would be taken while putting them on duty during the lockdown.

Table 4.1 | More than two in five police personnel reported that the vulnerable police personnel were not shifted to low-risk areas

Police Personnel's Response (%)				
	Do you know of any police personnel who were shifted to a low-risk area or given complete rest?		Were the police personnel allowed leaves if they had any symptoms of coronavirus, like fever, coughing etc.?	
	Yes	No*	Yes	No
Overall	56	42	84	13
Tier I cities	70	29	91	6
Tier II/III cities	49	50	81	16
18-29 years	59	39	86	9
30-39	59	40	86	10
40-49	53	45	82	17
50 years and above	48	51	80	20

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
*It includes the silent response category- 'no such provision here'.

Questions asked: I. During coronavirus outbreak, in some states, the police personnel suffering from some illness or the ones who were 55 years or above were either shifted to low-risk areas or were given a complete rest. Do you know of any police personnel who was shifted to a low risk area or given complete rest? II. And were the police personnel allowed leave if they had any symptoms of coronavirus, like fever, coughing etc.?

Overall, more than half of the personnel (56%) reported that those who were 55 years and above or with co-morbidities were either shifted to low-risk zones, or given complete rest. However, the older cohorts (50 years or above) were less likely to report so, as compared to the younger cohorts. Further, in Tier I cities, there seems to have been a greater degree of sensitivity towards these vulnerable segments among the police force. Seventy percent personnel in Tier I cities reported that vulnerable people were shifted

to low-risk areas whereas in Tier II/III cities, about half the police personnel (49%) reported so (Table 4.1).

On the issue of granting leave to those with visible symptoms, as high as four out of five personnel (84%) reported affirmatively. The difference between the two types of cities was again notable, with police personnel in the mega Tier I cities more likely to claim so (10 percentage points higher than the Tier II/III cities) (Table 4.1).

Personal precautions and the support from the department

While physical distancing is said to be one of the most effective ways to protect against the contagion, the study reveals that it was easier said than done for the frontline workers. Adopting this measure during the outbreak becomes the responsibility of all citizens, including the frontline workers. Further, those on duty during the Covid-19 pandemic should have been ideally checked regularly for any of the listed symptoms of the virus.

According to the police personnel, only about one in three (32%) were able to maintain physical distancing comprehensively, while about half (46%) reported that they were able to maintain it to some extent. About one out of five were either not able to do it regularly or not at all. Notably, a little more than one-third of personnel were able to maintain physical distancing to a large extent in Tier II/III cities, as against a quarter of police personnel in Tier I cities (Table 4.2).

It is also observed that physical distancing was perhaps taken more seriously by those who were more vulnerable – ones with existing comorbidities and the ones who were old. Two out of five police personnel with existing comorbidities and those above 50 years said they were able to maintain physical distancing to a large extent – 10 points higher than those without comorbidities or those less than 40 years of age (Table 4.2).

Containment of the virus among police personnel by their department can be ascertained by the frequency of health checkups, especially of those deployed for various tasks during the outbreak. On being asked if they were regularly monitored, two-thirds of the police personnel (65%) responded positively, whereas one in five (20%) reported that the department did not arrange for regular health checkups. Fifteen percent reported that only those who exhibited fever and other visible symptoms of Covid-19 were checked. What's more, with a gap of 15 points, those in Tier I cities were more likely to have undergone regular health checkups (Figure 4.4).

Table 4.2 | Physical distancing while performing duties were possible to a large extent only for one in three police personnel

Police Personnel's Response (%)				
	To a large extent	To some extent	Not much	Not at all
Overall	32	46	14	7
Tier I cities	24	60	10	5
Tier II/III cities	36	39	17	8
Personnel with existing morbidities	40	43	11	5
Without any existing morbidity	30	47	15	8
18-29 years	29	50	14	8
30-39 years	30	50	13	7
40-49 years	34	39	18	8
50 years and above	40	41	14	5

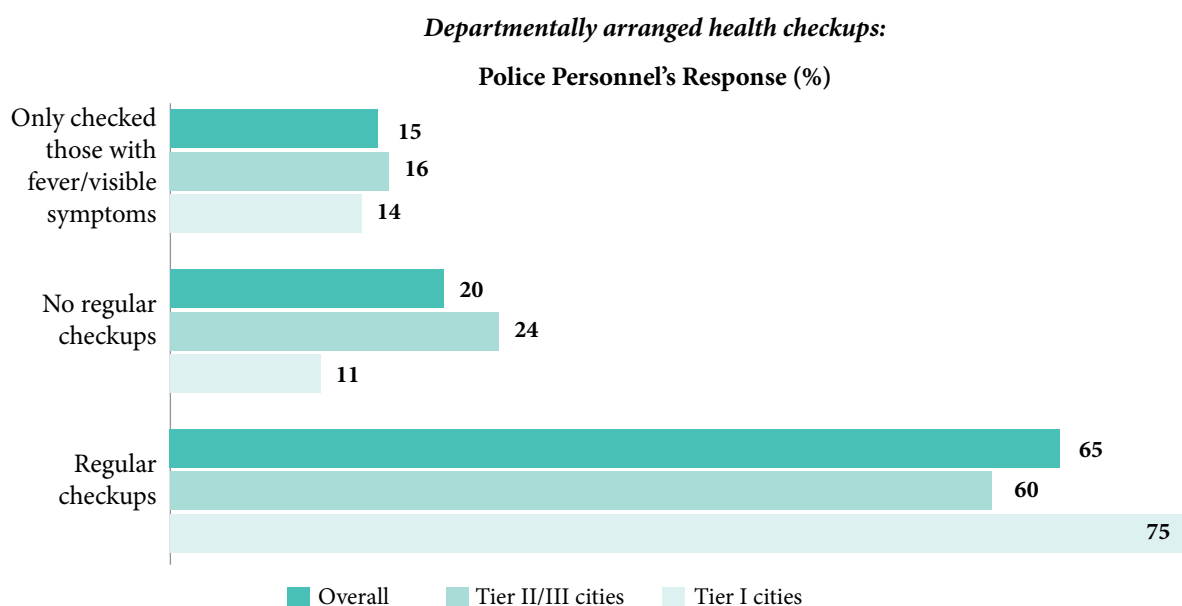
Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Question asked: To what extent was it possible for you to maintain physical distancing while performing your duties in order to protect you from contacting coronavirus - to a large extent, to some extent, not much, or not at all?

Infrastructural challenges of policing during the pandemic

As the outbreak led to new types of duties as well as new ways of discharging existing responsibilities, it is pertinent to address barriers and challenges that came their way, as perceived by the police personnel themselves. These include external factors, such as difficulty in coordination with other departments, leading to chaos and confusion. Some of the most common hurdles included inadequate staff, unprecedented exodus of migrants owing to the sudden nature of the lockdown, lack of coordination with police personnel from other districts or regions and the absence of financial resources for local police to meet Covid-19 related challenges. Apart from this, the present section looks at the adequacy of basic necessities provided by the police department to ensure the safety of their personnel, particularly those dealing with the public and the ones out in the field.

Vacancy and shortage of manpower has been a long-standing problem of the Indian police forces. As per the latest official statistics, the state police forces function at 80 per cent of their sanctioned capacity (BPRD, 2020). This problem became even more pronounced at a time when the need for police presence increased manifold. Among the obstacles reported by the personnel in this study, shortage of staff was the most prominent, with half of the police personnel raising this issue. This was even higher in the Tier II/III cities.

Figure 4.4 | Police personnel in Tier I cities more likely to have undergone regular health-checkups during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: During the last few months, did the department make any arrangement for regular health checkups for the police personnel performing various tasks during the coronavirus outbreak?

Further, almost a quarter of the police personnel admitted to facing confusion about their responsibilities in arranging shelters for the stranded migrants, with personnel deployed in Tier I cities more likely to feel so. About the same proportion admitted facing coordination-related issues with the police of other districts and regions. This was reportedly faced more by police personnel in Tier II/III cities, as compared to their counterparts in Tier I cities. Finally, on the issue of lack of financial resources, one-fifth reported it to be a hurdle, with Tier I cities better placed in this regard (Figure 4.5).

The most important protections against the virus are masks, soaps and/or sanitisers. Masks, the protective equipment of health workers, are also a shield for police personnel during the outbreak. The demand for sanitisers also dramatically surged during the pandemic. With regards to the adequacy of these essential items, there is a general positive response from police personnel. More than four in five police personnel reported to have been adequately provided with masks (86%) and sanitisers (85%). About three in four said they were supplied enough soaps (70%) to protect themselves from a potential infection. It appears that the police in Tier I cities had greater access to such supplies than their counterparts in the Tier II/III cities. Police personnel in Tier I cities were more likely to report the adequate availability of all three hygiene essentials – masks (13 percentage points more), sanitisers (14 percentage points more), and soaps (23 percentage points more) (Figure 4.6).

On the flip side, overall, 14 percent police personnel reported shortage or non-availability of masks and sanitisers; and 29 percent claimed the same for soaps. Again, this was considerably higher in the Tier II/III cities (Figure 4.6).

Police duty in the times of Covid-19: Special provisions and working hours

Policing duties expanded and transformed to cushion the blow of a deadly contagion and inadequate pandemic health infrastructure. On one hand, the daily-duties of police personnel had to be in line with several Covid-19 guidelines issued by the government. On the other, police personnel were assigned special tasks and duties to combat the virus. In this backdrop, the police personnel were asked whether they were provided with some special training on how to deal with the general public during the outbreak.

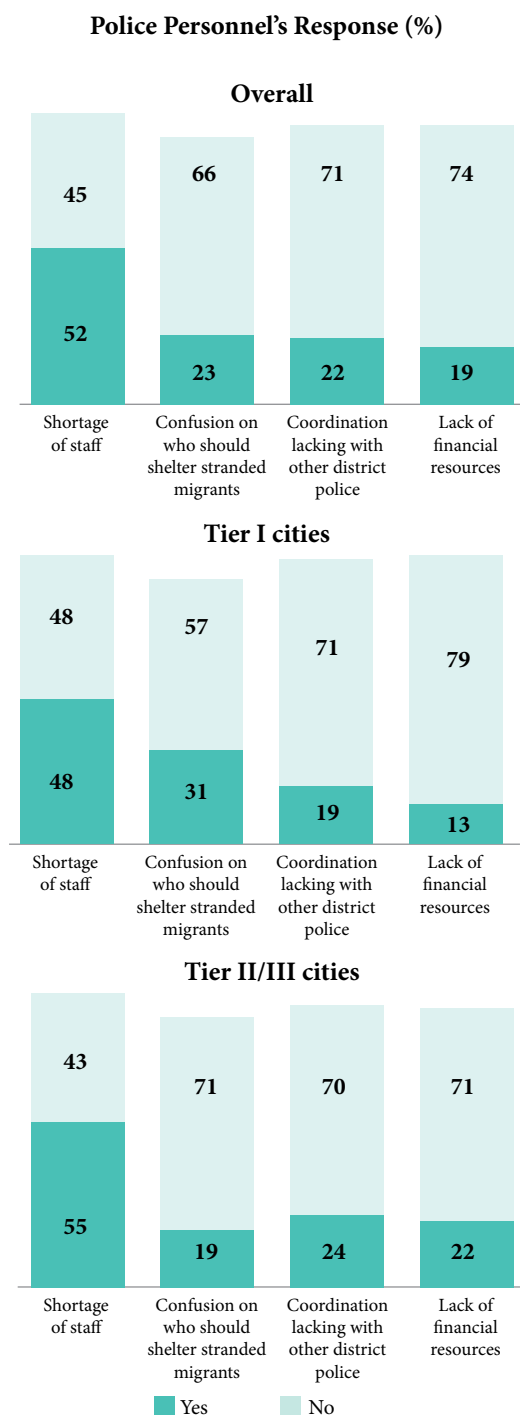
Special training for dealing with public during pandemic

More than half of the police personnel reported that keeping new protocols in mind, special training was imparted to them to deal with the public during the Covid-19 outbreak. However, more than two-fifths of the police person-

nel denied the same. The young recruits with less than five years in service were far less likely to have been provided such training, with only 43 percent reporting so. This was

Figure 4.5 | One out of two police personnel felt that shortage of staff was a major hurdle in performing duty during the lockdown

Did the police in this locality face any of the following while fighting coronavirus outbreak?



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

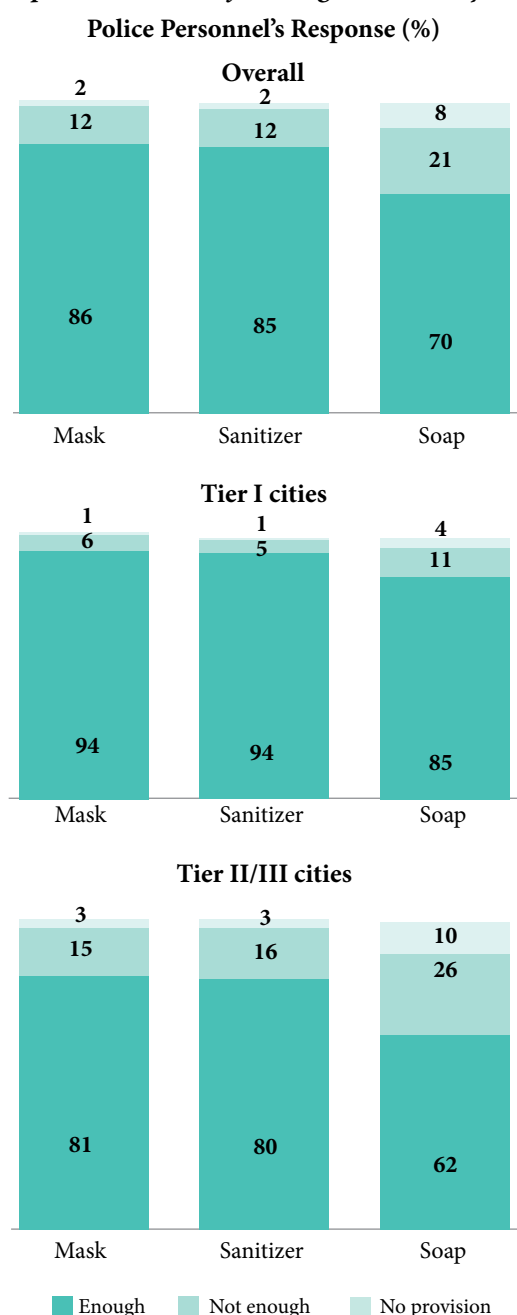
Questions asked: In your experience, did the police in this locality face any of the following while fighting Coronavirus outbreak- a. Lack of financial resources; b. Shortage of staff; c. Lack of coordination with police from other districts/regions; d. Confusion regarding who needed to arrange for shelter for stranded migrants?

16 percentage points lesser than those who were in service for five or more years (Table 4.3).

Further, police force in the Tier I cities seemed to be better prepared in this regard, with three out of five (59%) claiming to have received a special training – five percentage points higher than their counterparts in Tier II and III cities (Table 4.3).

Figure 4.6 | Masks, sanitisers and soaps were adequately supplied to the police during the lockdown

During coronavirus outbreak, were you adequately provided with the following while on duty?



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: During coronavirus outbreak, were you adequately provided with the following while on duty- a. Mask; b. Soap; c. Sanitiser?

On a state-wise comparison, the southern states were found to be more proactive when it came to providing special training. Nine in every 10 personnel in Tamil Nadu (96%) and four in every five police personnel in Kerala (81%) confirmed receiving a special training in this regard. A high proportion of police personnel from Maharashtra (85%) and Delhi (82%) also reported having received such training. Looking at the other end of the spectrum, the least prepared state in this regard seemed to be West Bengal. As high as four in every five (81%) of the police personnel reported to have received no such training.

Table 4.3 | More than two in five police personnel reported not being provided any special training; one in three reported not having PPE kits for those deployed in sensitive-zones

	Police Personnel's Response (%)			
	Special training for dealing with public during pandemic		Provision for PPE kits for those deployed in sensitive zones	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Overall	56	43	62	33
Tier I cities	59	38	71	25
Tier II/III cities	54	45	56	37
Less than five years of service	43	55	55	39
5-9 years of service	59	40	63	31
10 years and above of service	59	40	63	32

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: I. Were you provided with some special training on how to deal with the public during coronavirus outbreak? II. And were the police personnel deployed in sensitive zones provided with PPE kits (Personal Protective Equipment)?

Special provisions for those deployed in high-risk areas

Apart from being assigned general duties of enforcing lockdown regulations in all kinds of areas within the city, some police personnel were deployed at high-risk or sensitive zones, i.e. the localities with high concentration of Covid-19 infections. Given the highly contagious nature of the virus, PPE kits were a must for police personnel deployed in such sensitive zones. On being asked about the same, more than three in five (62%) police personnel reported that those who were assigned duties in sensitive and high-risk zones were given PPE kits, whereas, a significant proportion, one-third (33%) of the police personnel, did not report this. This must be read with a caveat that it was

the perception of the police personnel and might not fully capture the actual picture on the ground. However, it certainly hints at the lack of support from within the department for those at the frontlines. Further, personnel with five or more years of service, were more likely to have been provided with PPE kits. (Table 4.3).

With a gap of 15 percentage points, police personnel deployed in high-risk zones in Tier II/III cities appeared more at risk. While seven in every 10 police personnel (71%) in Tier I cities reported to have been provided with PPE kits, the proportion fell to about five in 10 (56%) in Tier II/III cities (Table 4.3).

Kerala and Gujarat appeared to be better placed, with nine in every 10 police personnel (89%) reporting affirmatively with regard to access to PPEs for those deployed in high-risk areas. This was followed by Tamil Nadu (86%) and Delhi (76%). In contrast, four in every five police personnel in Bihar (83%) and two in every three in West Bengal (65%) denied getting access to the same.

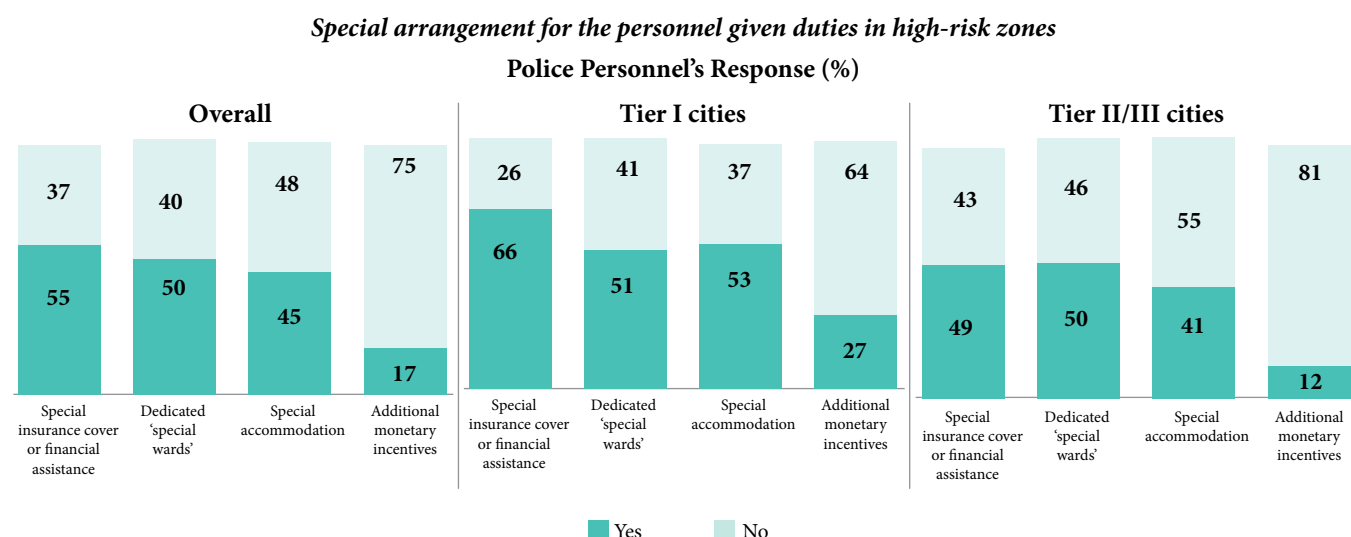
In many states, especially the ones with heavy caseloads, police departments made some special arrangements for their personnel deployed in the high-risk zones. First, on being asked about these arrangements, nearly one in two police personnel (45%) reported that the government arranged for special accommodation for such personnel so that they did not have to return to their families daily. How-

ever, a higher proportion – 48 percent did not agree. Police personnel in Tier I cities were better placed in this regard, compared to their counterparts in Tier II/III cities. *Second*, one in two police personnel (50%) admitted having access to dedicated Covid health centres, or special wards in the hospitals, devoted to the personnel. Police in both types of cities responded more or less similarly. *Third*, more than one in two police personnel (55%) claimed that they were guaranteed a special insurance cover or financial assistance to the family, in case they succumbed to the coronavirus. With two in three police personnel (66%) reporting so, the police in Tier I cities felt more secure compared to their counterparts in the Tier II/III cities. *Lastly*, on being asked if the department provided the police personnel deployed in high risk zones with additional monetary incentives, three in four (75%) denied. However, again police personnel in Tier I cities were in a slightly better position (Figure 4.7).

Increase in working hours

During the lockdown, the overall working hours of the police personnel significantly increased. This happened because the police personnel were given many additional tasks related to proper imposition of the lockdown rules in addition to their regular work. Hence, enforcing law and order took on a new flexibility during the Covid-19 outbreak, in order to accommodate new responsibilities regarding health regulations to keep the virus at bay.

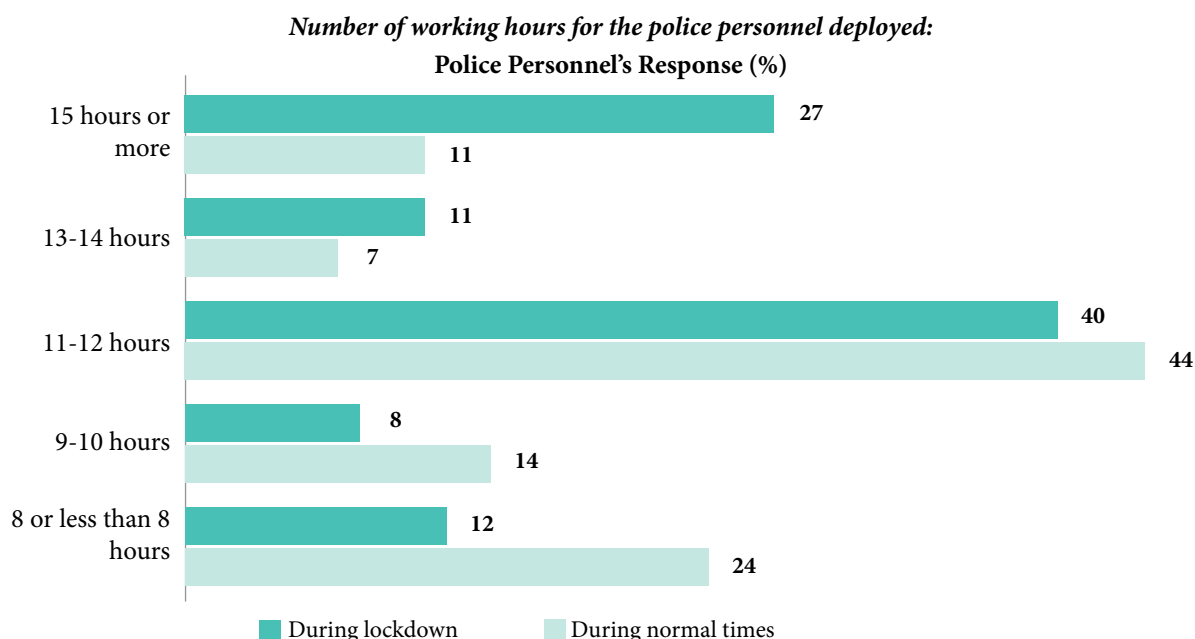
Figure 4.7 | About half of the personnel deployed in sensitive zones were provided with special accommodations, dedicated health centres and special insurance covers



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: During coronavirus outbreak, some states had special arrangement for those police personnel who were given duties in high-risk zones. Did the government arrange for any of the following in your region- a. Special accommodation for the police personnel, so that they don't have to go back to their families every day; b. Dedicated Corona/Covid Health Centres or 'special wards' in hospitals for police; c. Special insurance cover or financial assistance to family, in case of police personnel dying due to coronavirus; d. Additional monetary incentives for those deployed in high-risk zones?

Figure 4.8 | Four out of five police personnel reported working for more than 11 hours a day during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: How many hours did you work daily, when the lockdown was in place? And what used to be your daily working hours in normal times, i.e. before the lockdown?

Figure 4.8 shows that the working hours of the police personnel had increased significantly during the lockdown, as compared to 'normal times.' Since three out of five police personnel (62%) reported to be working for 11 hours or more daily even before the lockdown was imposed, one can imagine its impact on the already overburdened police force. During the lockdown, as many as four out of five police personnel (78%) reported working for at least 11 hours a day, 16 percentage points more than in normal times. The proportion of those working for 10 hours or less was almost halved during the lockdown, compared to normal times. Further, with more than a quarter of police personnel reporting to have worked for at least 15 hours during the lockdown, one can well imagine the physical and mental toll this would have led to.

In what can only be termed as ironical and unfortunate, the police personnel with existing comorbidities were more likely to be working for longer hours during the lockdown, as compared to earlier. Looking at the responses of only those police personnel who reported having existing comorbidities, 65 percent reported working for 11 hours or more before the lockdown, which rose to 72 percent during the lockdown. Segregating them further, one in four (26%) reported working for at least 15 hours a day during the lockdown, which exposed them to a greater health-risk (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 | Personnel with existing co-morbidities were more likely to be working for longer hours during the lockdown

Police Personnel's Response (%)					
	8 or less than 8 hours	9-10 hours	11-12 hours	13-14 hours	15 hours or more
Tier I cities					
During lockdown	2	4	58	12	22
During normal times	21	8	49	8	12
Tier II/III cities					
During lockdown	17	10	31	10	30
During normal times	25	17	41	6	10
Personnel with existing morbidities					
During lockdown	18	9	35	11	26
During normal times	20	15	45	7	13
Police personnel without any existing morbidity					
During lockdown	10	8	42	11	28
During normal times	25	14	44	7	10

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: I. How many hours did you work daily, when the lockdown was in place? II. And what used to be your daily working hours in normal times, i.e. before the lockdown?

Further, police force in Tier I cities appeared to be overworked even in normal times, with seven of 10 police personnel (69%) reporting to have been working for at least 11 hours a day. This increased to nine in 10 (92%), when the lockdown was enforced. In comparison, in Tier II/III cities, this proportion rose from 57 percent in normal times to 71 percent during the lockdown (*Table 4.4*).

Looking at the states, Kerala and Delhi had the highest proportion of police personnel reporting to be on duty for 15 hours or more, with two-thirds (65%) and half of the police personnel (53%), reporting the same, respectively. In Bihar, half of the police personnel (53%) claimed the same as well.

Conclusion

The findings bring to light the changed policing responsibilities in extraordinary times of an unprecedented health emergency. Duties of police personnel on the frontlines to curb the spread of Covid-19 coalesced with managing the general law and order situation in their regions. All of this snowballed into uncertain working conditions for the law enforcement agencies. The study also draws an inference that personnel in Tier I and Tier II/III cities fared differently in a lot of aspects. Their perceptions differed on issues relating to the fear of the virus, or access to facilities for the better management of the law and order. There is also a difference in the working conditions of police personnel in some of the most affected mega Tier I cities and Tier II/III cities. Apart from this, a few other factors, like age and experience, were also at play.

Summing up some of the major findings, firstly, two in three (64%) common people felt that the police were very careful, strictly adhering to Covid-19 protocol. Corroborating this, three-fourths of the police personnel claimed to have thermal cameras (76%) and sensor-based sanitisation machines (75%) installed in their stations to protect themselves against the virus. However, other contraptions, such as UV disinfection boxes (43%) and video intercom devices (32%) were not as common. Comparing the Tier I cities with the Tier II/III cities, police forces in the former seemed more likely to have used such contactless methods during the pandemic. Further, as high as 96 percent of the police personnel rated the hygiene conditions of their stations to be good or very good.

Secondly, on issues of whether the police force showed concern for their vulnerable personnel, a somewhat mixed picture emerged. While a majority (56%) reported that the elderly personnel and the ones with existing comorbidities were shifted to low-risk zones or given complete rest, two in five (37%) denied the same. Further, those deployed in Tier II/III cities and those above 50 years were more likely

to deny the same. However, on the issue of granting leave to somebody with visible symptoms, overall, more than eight in 10 (84%) responded positively.

Thirdly, highlighting the challenges of working during the Covid-19 outbreak, only one in three police personnel (32%) reported to have been able to maintain physical distancing to a large extent. About the need for constant health-checkups, especially for frontline workers, two-thirds of the police personnel reported that their departments have arranged for the same, whereas one in five denied this.

Fourthly, the police force faced innumerable challenges in the course of their duties in the midst of a rapidly escalating public health crisis. Highlighting the same, half of the police personnel (52%) identified shortage of staff as a major hurdle, while about a quarter claimed to have faced confusion with regard to making arrangements for migrants (23%). About one-fifth identified coordination with police from other districts (22%) and lack of financial resources (19%) as major hurdles. Despite the pandemonium around coordination and logistics, availability of hygiene essentials to protect personnel were not scarce. Masks, sanitisers and soaps were made available to the personnel, with more than four in five reporting to have adequately been provided with masks (86%) and sanitisers (85%). Seven in 10 (70%) claimed to have adequate supply of soaps during the outbreak.

Lastly, while analysing the preparedness of the police in the face of an unprecedented challenge, a diverse scenario emerges. While more than half of the police personnel (56%) claimed receiving special training to deal with the public during the outbreak, more than two in five (43%) denied the same. Further, while three in five (62%) reported that the personnel deployed in high-risk zones were provided with PPE kits, one in three (33%) denied having received the same. Speaking of the special provisions for those deployed in high-risk zones, 45 percent of the police personnel reported that they were provided with special accommodation (so that they did not have to go back to their families every day after duty). Fifty percent and 55 percent, respectively, reported having access to dedicated 'special wards' in hospitals, if infected, and a 'special insurance cover' for the family of those succumbing to Covid-19.

The battle with a fast spreading virus has been exhausting for all the front-line workers, including the police, both physically and mentally. The police force was certainly understaffed, overworked, with four in five (78%) reporting to be working for at least 11 hours a day during the lockdown. More than a quarter (27%) apparently worked for at least 15 hours a day. One of the most important takeaways

from their grueling ordeal is the need for increasing the strength of the police, which seem to be a perennial issue across the states. The pandemic has also reinforced the urgent need for designing specialised training modules and standard operating procedures for the police force, so that they are able to deal with such challenges in a more effective and strategic way in the future.

Reference

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5

Communications and Capabilities: *People's Appraisals of Police Performance*

*A man wearing a protective mask walks past a graffiti paying tribute to police and healthcare workers during the lockdown in Mumbai, India
June 24, 2020. © REUTERS/Francis Mascarenhas.*

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The survey captures a broadly positive public perception of policing during the pandemic. Two in every five people (40%) considered the police to be highly efficient and 46% somewhat efficient in controlling the outbreak. However, the poor people were less likely to believe that the police were efficient.
- An overwhelming majority of common people (62%) and police personnel (71%) believed that the restrictions imposed during the lockdown applied equally to everyone. However, a significant proportion (29% people; 26% police personnel) felt that some people got away more easily. Poorer people are more likely to believe that curbs were not imposed equally for everyone.
- With a higher visibility of the police at public spaces, nearly three in four (71%) people reported feeling secure. However, about one in five (18%) felt threatened. It was the poor and economically vulnerable who felt more threatened, indicating that they were disproportionately affected by increased policing.
- Overall, the pandemic seems to have improved the relationship between the police and citizens. Two in three people (66%) reported an improvement in the level of trust and around the same number (65%) reported an improvement in the image of the police following the lockdown. Around half of the common people surveyed felt that the police handled the situation efficiently despite a sudden lockdown.
- Common people from Andhra Pradesh and Delhi were more likely to believe that the police handling of the lockdown was highly efficient. A high proportion of common people from the two states also felt secure with increased police presence. In contrast, people in Tamil Nadu had the worst perception of the police reporting inefficiency and feeling more threatened.
- Largely, people in Tier II/III cities had a better perception of the police during the lockdown, compared to the Tier I cities. More people in smaller towns felt that the police were efficient in controlling the situation and that they felt secure with their increased presence during the lockdown.

Communications and Capabilities: *People's Appraisals of Police Performance*

While the global public health crisis created unforeseen challenges of governance around the world, the law enforcement apparatus took the biggest hit after the public health agencies. They were given new duties like enforcing stringent lockdowns, protecting their vulnerable populations against fresh outbreaks and maintaining law and order. The police in India too had a tough time reconciling with its new and emerging realities. Following a conventional 'law and order paradigm', the police had to ensure proper implementation of the lockdown rules and regulations through patrolling vans, on foot vigil and vehicular checkpoints (Mangla & Kapoor, 2020). On the other hand, they were also at the forefront of public health campaigns, enforcement of new compliances, making people aware of the dos and don'ts, among other things. In India too, apart from general policing, there were many additional responsibilities for the law enforcement institutions across the country, especially in big metro cities witnessing the first wave of Covid-19 cases. The police, apparently, took on a new role- that of public health messengers (Mangla & Kapoor).

The disease, and the consequential lockdowns, therefore, brought police personnel into direct contact with people in need of urgent assistance. To a large extent, they modified their primary role and nature of duties performed in 'normal' times. Despite limited funds available for preventive policing, community policing, and citizen outreach programmes, how well, and to what extent, were the police able to communicate with citizens in these testing times?

This chapter tries to understand the efficiency of police in responding to the urgent and unprecedented situation created due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the consequential lockdowns. The first section looks at the various mediums used by the police in communicating with the general public regarding the nature and limits of restrictions imposed, and creating awareness about the disease. The sec-

ond section shares the findings on the citizens' perceptions about the efficiency of their local police in enforcing the lockdown(s) and controlling the Covid-19 outbreak.

Highlighting the perceptions of citizens as well as police personnel on whether the rules and regulations were imposed equally on all the sections of the society, the next section delves deeper into the nature and levels of strictness imposed during the lockdown. And finally, the last section measures the levels of trust reposed by the citizens on the police during the last phase of the lockdown when the nature of interaction between the two is believed to have changed.

Communication with general public

Owing to a growing sense of uncertainty fuelled by the sudden announcement of the nationwide lockdown, the police were expected to play a crucial role in disseminating the necessary information to the public. This was especially true, concerning the newly imposed rules and regulations. They updated citizens about the frequently changing guidelines regarding the disease. The present section, thus, looks at the communication aspect of policing. It highlights the various platforms, and to what extent they were used by the police to inform the citizens about the rules and regulations, and in spreading awareness about the disease.

Various mediums used by police

The police took on the task of spreading awareness about the disease among citizens using a variety of mediums. Their most common tool was announcements through loudspeakers, followed by television advertisements. This is highlighted in *Figure 5.1*, through an open-ended question. More than one-third (36%) of the common people said they received the relevant information from the police through the announcements made via loudspeakers. This came out as the most-used medium by the police, more

Note: The study was conducted during the months of October and November in 2020, and therefore, it is confined to the first wave of the Covid-19 and the first phase of the consequential lockdown(s) that were imposed in 2020.

so in Tier II and III cities. About one-fifths in the Tier I cities reported getting the information via loudspeaker announcements in their neighbourhoods. The proportion of such people in Tier II and III cities was twice as much of the Tier-I cities.

Further, the police also seem to have made good use of television and social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp to reach out to the public at a time when physical movement was highly restricted. Both TV and social media came out to be more popular in the Tier I cities. A little over one in every 10 citizens claimed to have received the information by police through advertisements on TV channels and the same proportion reported to have received the information on social media (13% each). This was five percentage points higher than the Tier II/III cities. Further, police in Tier I cities relied far more on communicating to the general public by distributing information pamphlets or pasting them across residential colonies, with 12 percent people claiming so (four times more than Tier II/III cities) (*Figure 5.1*).

However, more than one in 10 (11%) also reported that the relevant information did not reach them through the police. Delving deeper into the data, Tamil Nadu (26%) and Kerala (25%) had the highest proportion of such respondents, with one-fourth claiming so, followed by Uttar Pradesh (15%).

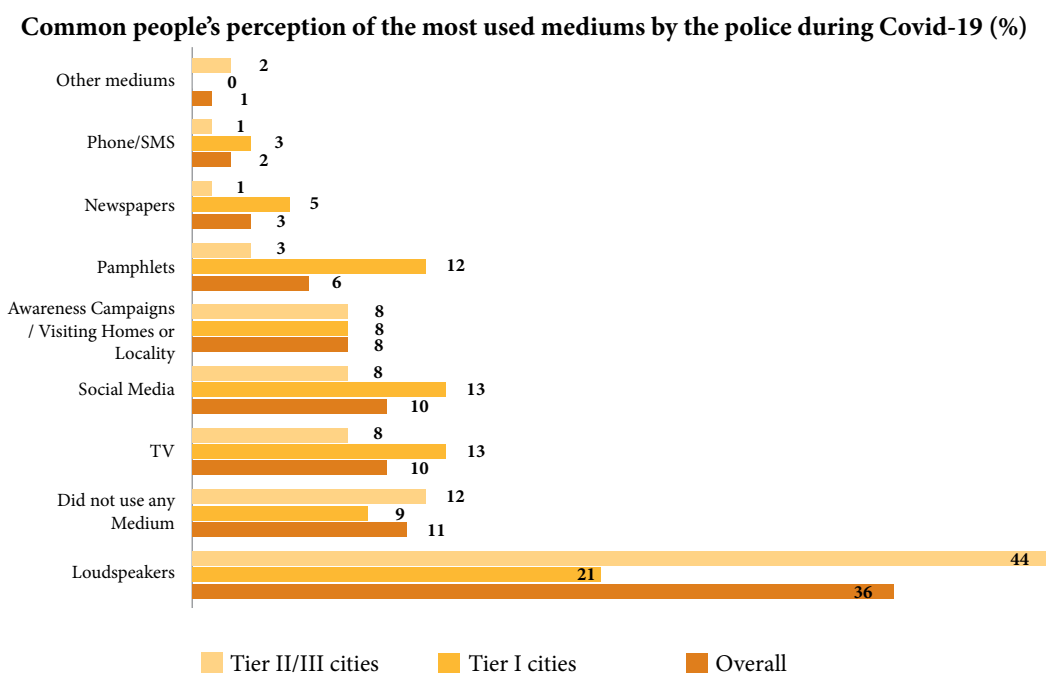
Use of social media by the police

Given all kinds of movement restrictions, social media proved to be one of the most efficient mediums to communicate all necessary information to the public. It may not be the ‘most-used’ platform by the police due to digital divide, but it certainly played a crucial role. It helped reach out to the public about the ‘dos and don’ts’ during the pandemic.

In a separate question on the use of social media by the police, across both Tier I and Tier II/III cities, the police personnel reported making a lot of use of various social media platforms. Overall, as the data suggests, almost three out of five police personnel claimed to have used social media extensively, with police personnel in the Tier II/III cities reporting to have used it slightly more than those in the Tier I cities (*Figure 5.2*).

Further, certain states emerged as very proactive in this regard. With nine in 10 police personnel claiming to have used social media platforms ‘a lot’ during the outbreak, Kerala (89%) had the highest proportion of police personnel making use of online messaging. It is placed at the top across the 10 states where the study was conducted, while West Bengal (16%) had the least proportion of police personnel reporting the use of social media.

Figure 5.1 | ‘Loudspeaker announcements’ – the most used medium by the police during Covid-19, more so in Tier II/III cities



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

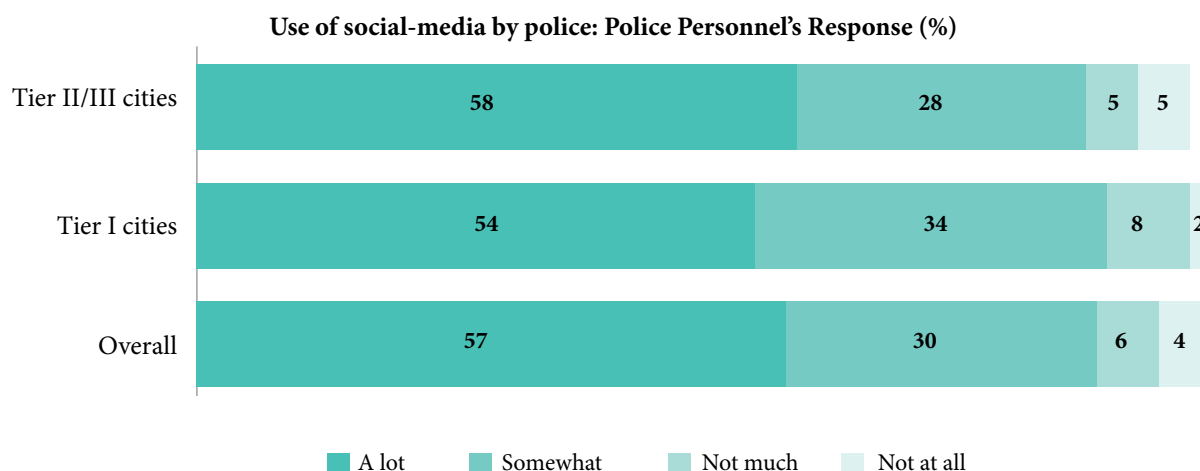
Question asked: During lockdown, which medium did the police use the most to communicate necessary information to the local people here?

In contrast, when one looks at the responses of social media users on a similar question, it appears that the police seem to have overrated their use of social media. Compared to the responses of police personnel, social media users were about half less likely to report getting the information from the police on Facebook, WhatsApp and other similar platforms. Three in every 10 reported that they received such information 'very often'. Further, overall, about one-sixth (16%) of social media users claimed to have never received any information from the police on social media platforms. Social media users in Tier II/III cities were twice as

likely to report so as compared to Tier I cities (Figure 5.3). There is an apparent difference between the perceptions of the police personnel and social media users about the exchange of information through these platforms.

Despite this difference in the opinion of police and common people, the overall picture indicates an efficient use of social media platforms by the police during the pandemic. The police in Tier I cities were more likely to have used them according to citizens, as compared to the other cities in the sample.

Figure 5.2 | Nearly nine out of 10 police personnel report using social media platforms frequently to create awareness among masses

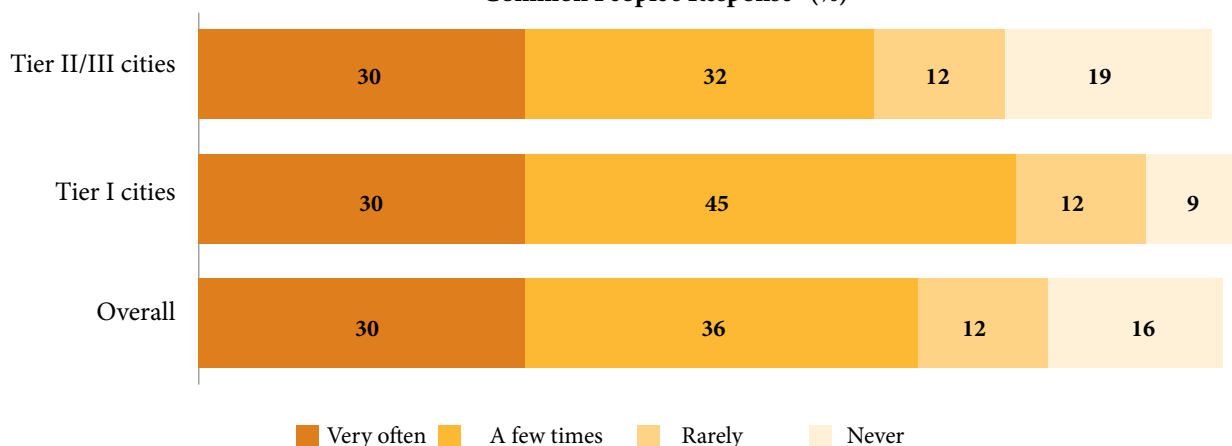


Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: According to you, how much did police make use of social media platforms, like Facebook and WhatsApp etc., to share relevant information regarding coronavirus and lockdown with the people- a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?

Figure 5.3 | Three in every 10 social media users reported receiving pandemic-related information on social media 'very often'

**How often did you receive information regarding coronavirus & lockdown from police on social media platforms?
Common People's Response* (%)**



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

*Response of social media users among common people. Thirteen percent respondents in both type of cities said they were not social media users.

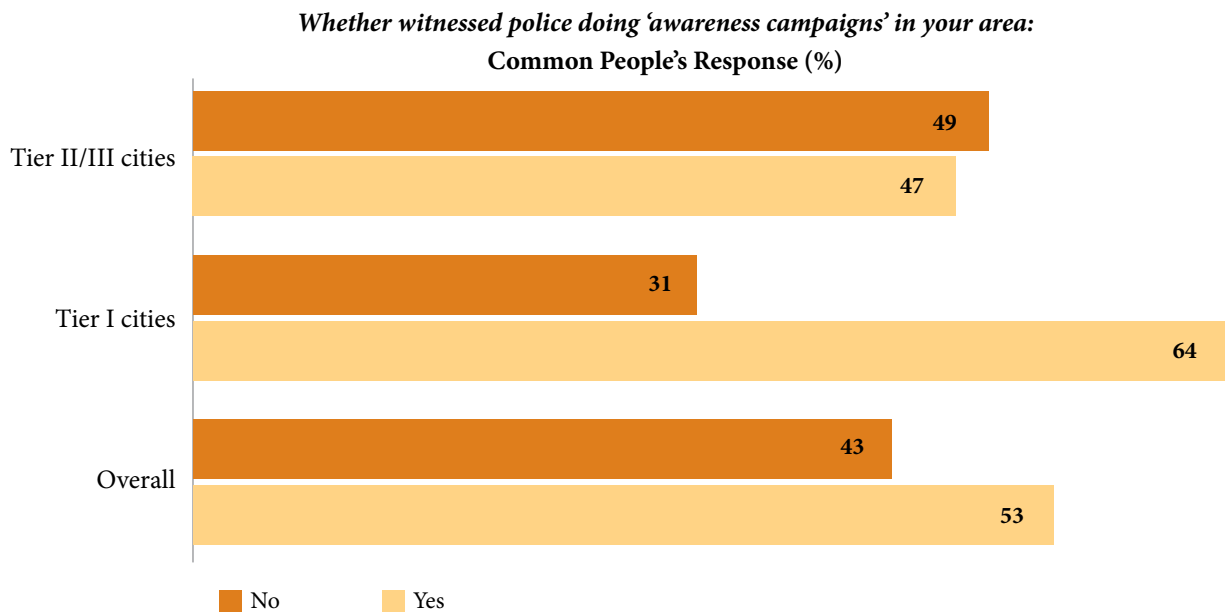
Question asked: How often did you receive relevant information regarding coronavirus and lockdown on social media platforms, like Facebook and WhatsApp etc., by state police-- very often, a few times, rarely or never?

Awareness campaigns by the police

To ensure that people remain at home and stay safe from the highly infectious Covid-19, there were various innovative 'awareness campaigns and programmes' organised by the police. These were done especially in cities with the maximum number of cases (*The Hindu*, 2020). The cops in Delhi, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and many other states

reportedly used unique and creative tactics. This ranged from painting the roads with stay-at-home messages and announcements by local artistes dressed up as *Yamraj* (the Hindu God of death), to organising pledge-taking campaigns. These measures were undertaken to make sure that all citizens adhere to the strict lockdown rules (NDTV 2020; *The ANI* 2020).

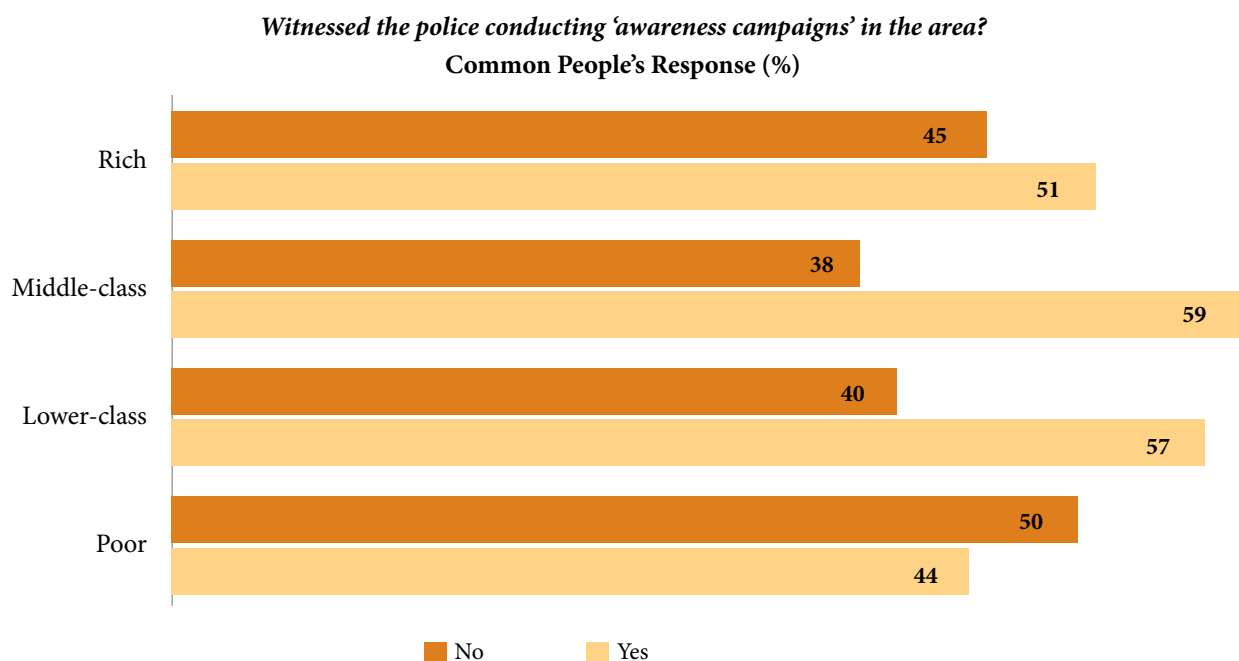
Figure 5.4 | People in Tier I cities more likely to have witnessed awareness campaigns by the police



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: In many states, police planned various 'awareness campaigns' in order to make citizens aware about coronavirus. Did you witness the police conducting such campaigns in this locality?

Figure 5.5 | Poor people less likely to have witnessed awareness campaigns by police during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: In many states, police planned various 'awareness campaigns' in order to make citizens aware about coronavirus. Did you witness the police conducting such campaigns in this locality?

In the study, the common people across some of the most affected cities were asked if they had witnessed any such ‘awareness campaigns’ organised by their respective state police and their opinions were divided. While a majority responded affirmatively, more than two in five denied witnessing any such campaigns by their police. The difference was notable among the two types of cities. While in the Tier II/III cities, people were equally divided, in the big Tier I cities, the proportion of those saying ‘yes’ (64%) were twice the number of those who responded in the negative (31%). Put simply, people in Tier II and III cities were far less likely to have witnessed such campaigns than those in Tier I cities (Figure 5.4).

Looking at the states, Kerala and West Bengal had the highest proportion of common people not having witnessed such campaigns, with 78 percent and 68 percent, respectively, denying seeing such efforts by the police.

On comparing the responses across different income-groups, the lowest income group (poor) were least likely to have witnessed such awareness campaigns, with less than one in two responding affirmatively. This may point to the police not being as active in the poor localities, as in more affluent ones, while planning such awareness campaigns (Figure 5.5).

Overall, the picture appears somewhat positive, with police across densely populated cities in the most-affected states making fair use of various mediums to communicate important messages around the unknown virus. This proved to be the efficient way of reaching their target audience at a time when there was lots of misinformation regarding the disease.

Perceptions on the efficiency and capability of police during the lockdown

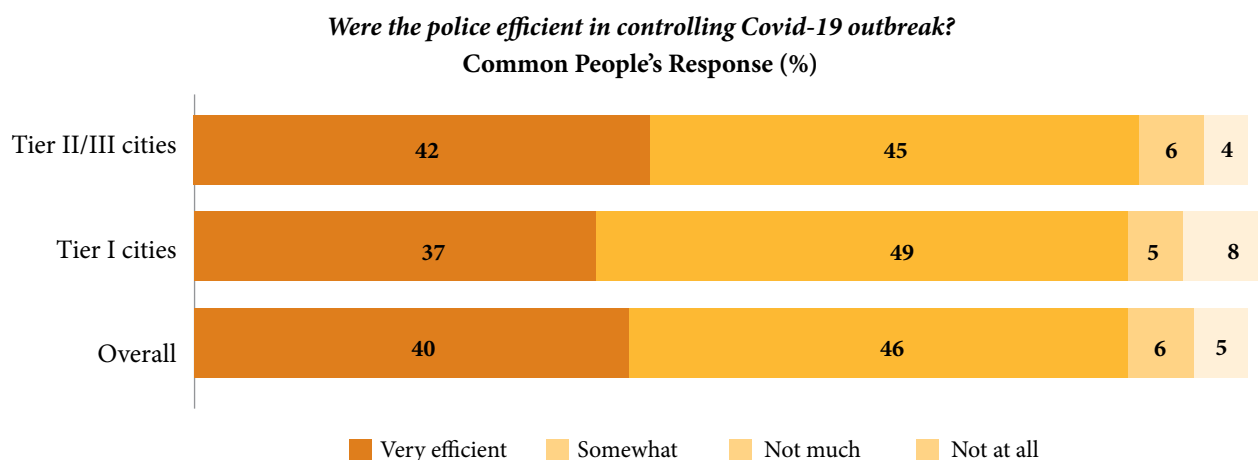
How well did the police manage their Covid-19 related duties? Could they ensure proper implementation of the lockdown, and help control the spread of the virus? In the light of these questions, the present section looks at the citizens’ opinions about the efficiency of the police in controlling the coronavirus outbreak. It also analyses the people’s perception of the ability of the police force in managing the sudden lockdown. Further, it also tries to capture their general perception of the overall capability of the police in handling such pandemics.

The efficiency of the police in controlling the Covid-19 outbreak

People responded more or less positively regarding the efficiency of the police in controlling the outbreak. Two in every five persons reported that the police were highly efficient in controlling the outbreak in their cities, and more than two in every five believed them to be somewhat efficient. Only 11 percent contradicted the proposition. The satisfaction recorded was high across both types of cities. However, people in Tier II and III cities reported slightly higher satisfaction and were more likely to be approving of the work done by the police to control the outbreak (Figure 5.6).

Further desegregating the responses state-wise puts the Tamil Nadu Police in an unflattering light. About one in six people (17%) perceived that their police were not efficient at all. Andhra Police were found to be on the brighter end of the spectrum, with nearly two in every three (64%) rating their police as highly efficient.

Figure 5.6 | Two in every five persons believe that the police was highly efficient in controlling the Covid-19 outbreak



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: In your opinion, how efficient was the police in controlling the corona virus outbreak in your city – very, somewhat, not much or not at all?

Across income categories, even though a fair level of satisfaction was recorded in all the sections, the opinions of the poorest section of the society did not fully resonate with the others. The poor were slightly less likely to rate the work of the police as ‘very efficient’, while the middle-class appeared most satisfied (Figure 5.6a).

Capability of police in handling such pandemic situations

Another question in the study, put to both the police personnel and the civilians, reinforces the high level of satisfaction enjoyed by the police among the general public. Two in five common people believed that the police were highly capable of handling such pandemic situations. Showing the same trend, people in Tier II and III cities were more likely to believe so. Further, once again, the poorer sections of society seemed less likely to agree, though only slightly.

However, when we compare the responses of the general public with the responses of police personnel on the same question, we find a stark difference. Police are more likely to consider themselves as highly capable. While about two in every three (66%) police personnel rated themselves the highest on the capability index, about two in every five (41%) common people had such confidence in police prowess—25 percentage points lesser. At 33 percentage points, this gap was even wider in the Tier I cities. Police personnel here were almost twice as likely to consider themselves highly capable of handling such crises situations, compared to the common public. There is visibly a

difference in the perception of the police about their skills and how common people viewed their capabilities (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 | Sixty-six percent police personnel consider police highly capable in handling the pandemic, as against 41 percent citizens

Police Personnel's Response (%)				
	A lot	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all
Overall	66	29	2	1
Tier I cities	71	26	2	0
Tier II or III cities	63	31	3	2
Common People's Response (%)				
Overall	41	46	8	2
Tier I cities	38	47	11	2
Tier II or III cities	43	45	6	2

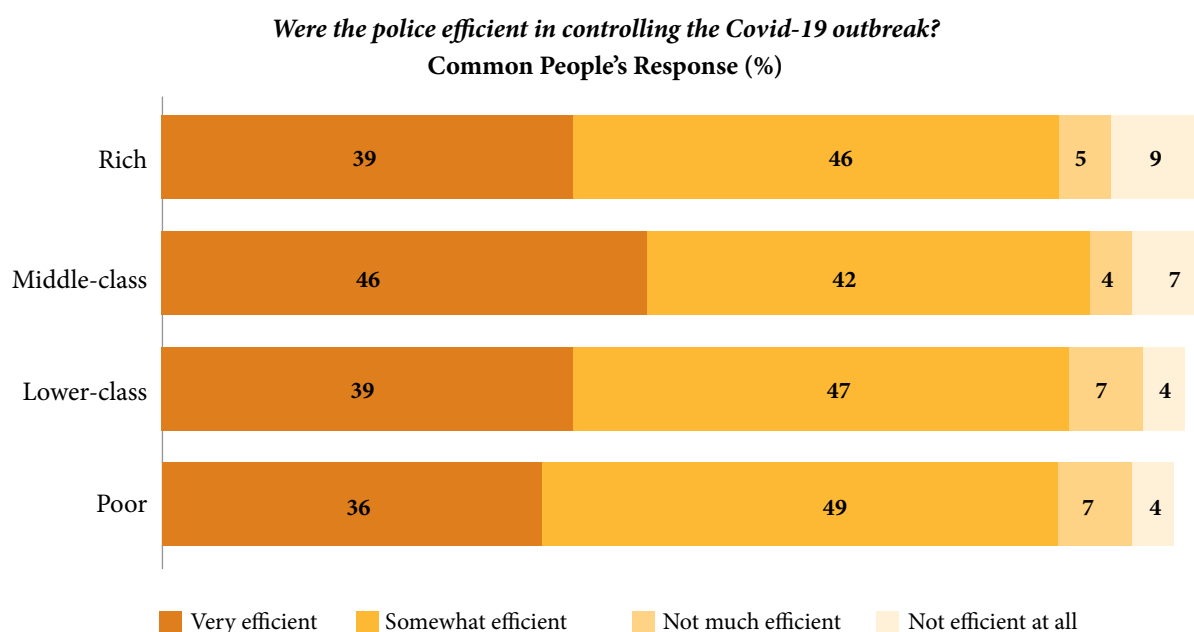
Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: In your experience of last few months, how much do you think the police is capable of handling such pandemic situations- a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?

Police amid a sudden nationwide lockdown

With a nation-wide lockdown being imposed at four hours' notice, both the public as well as the public officials were largely unprepared for the sudden repercussions. In this context, we try to look at how well the police managed to enforce an abrupt nationwide lockdown. On the two contradictory statements, i.e., whether the police was able to manage the sudden situation well or if the sudden

Figure 5.6 a | Poor less likely to rate the police as highly efficient during the lockdown



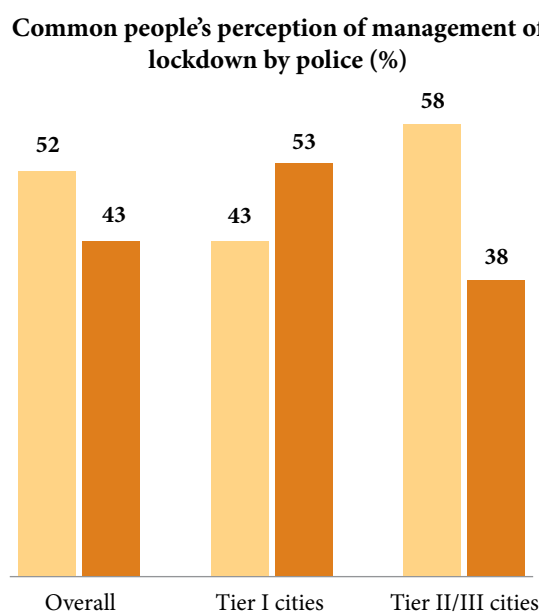
Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: In your opinion, how efficient was the police in controlling the coronavirus outbreak in your city- very, somewhat, not much or not at all?

lockdown made it difficult for the police to manage the situation, the general public was found to be almost equally divided in their opinions. This indicates a feeling of sympathy towards the police force, who indeed had difficulties in controlling such a situation.

However, on comparing the Tier I and Tier II / III cities, one can observe a striking difference in the public opinion regarding this. Residents of Tier I cities were more likely to believe that the sudden lockdown announcement by the government made it very difficult for the police to control the situation. Residents of Tier II/III cities were more likely to believe the opposite, i.e. despite a sudden lockdown, police controlled the situation really well. This would, in all likelihood, have a lot to do with the general level of awareness, expectations from the police and the difference in the nature of the challenge faced in the two types of locations (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7 | One out of two people felt police managed lockdown situation well despite a sudden lockdown, while 43 percent believe that the sudden declaration of lockdown made it difficult for police to control the situation



- "When the lockdown was declared by the government, despite a short notice, police managed to control the situation really well"
- "Sudden declaration of lockdown made it very difficult for the police to control the situation"

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.
Questions asked: Which of the two statements do you agree more with?-(1): 'When the lockdown was declared by the government., despite a short notice, police managed to control the situation really well' (2): 'Sudden declaration of lockdown made it very difficult for the police to control the situation'.

On a state-wise comparison, public opinion in Uttar Pradesh was mostly in favour of the police controlling the

situation really well. As many as four in five (79%) people believed so. Bihar had more than two in every three (69%) people believing the opposite—that it was rather very difficult for the police to control the situation.

Policing amid strict prohibitions

Considering India's large population, policing during a pandemic was certainly challenging. The urgent need to regulate public movement with lockdown-induced rules and regulations increased police-people interaction to a considerable extent. Keeping the complexities of the nation-wide lockdown in mind, the present section explores the perception of the general public on 'stricter' policing during that time. It also highlights the hurdles or difficulties faced by police personnel on the ground in implementing the restrictions. Further, in the light of the existing inequalities in society, was it easier for some people to navigate the lockdown prohibitions? This segment discusses the opinions of people on the extent to which the police were able to implement the lockdown prohibitions impartially.

The biggest hurdle for the police during the pandemic

While handling the mounting concerns around the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the police faced various kinds of hurdles. Both police personnel and common people had a perception that the biggest difficulty faced by the police was to manage the public during the lockdown. As shown in Table 5.2, over a quarter (27%) of the respondents (both police personnel and common people) felt that it was very difficult for the police to manage people. This included ensuring that people stay inside their homes, keeping a strict vigil on people out on the streets for non-essential tasks and implementing all the lockdown rules and regulations. With almost two in every five (37%) saying so, police personnel in Tier I cities were far more likely to report this as the biggest difficulty for them, as compared to their counterparts deployed in Tier II and III cities.

With one out of five (21%) police personnel and about one in every seven (14%) common people reporting so, the second most difficult issue was ensuring the safety and security of the public from the spread of the virus. This included creating awareness and ensuring that people followed all safety measures including wearing masks, using sanitisers, and maintaining physical distancing.

Notably, a little over one in every 10 (13%) police personnel worried about a potential risk to their own health, or that of their family members, while being on Covid-19 duty. This included the fear of contracting the virus while performing their duties. Additionally, some police person-

nel also reported the lack of proper safety equipment to protect them from the infection (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 | More than a quarter of police personnel and citizens reported that managing the public during the lockdown was the biggest difficulty faced by the police

Difficulties faced by the police during the lockdown						
	Police Personnel's Response (%)			Common People's Response (%)		
	Overall	Tier I cities	Tier II or III cities	Overall	Tier I cities	Tier II or III cities
Managing public during lockdown	27	37	21	27	25	28
Ensuring safety & security of public from Covid-19	21	23	21	14	19	11
Increased health risk to police personnel themselves	13	9	16	5	5	5
Managing poor/migrants	8	7	8	7	10	5
Government/lack of planning/resources/training	7	4	8	2	0	2
Overworked/lack of staff	6	2	9	4	1	6
Any other	1	2	1	1	1	1
No response	17	16	17	41	39	42

Note: All figures are rounded off.

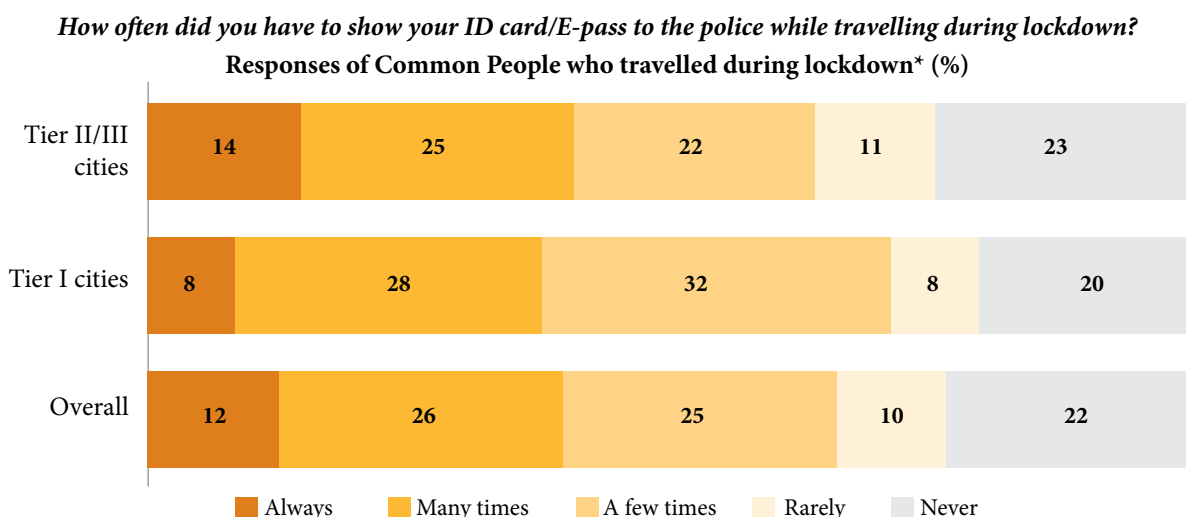
Question asked: According to you, what was the biggest hurdle/difficulty faced by the police while handling the coronavirus pandemic?

Surveillance while travelling

While the lockdown was in place, there were several types of restrictions imposed on the general public. The most common curb imposed was on the free movement of citizens from one place to another—within the state as well as inter-state. Owing to such restrictions, people travelling to various destinations had to show travel passes issued by the police or administration or cite reasons for travelling. This was especially true when they needed to travel outside the city or to some other state. On being asked about the frequency of travel pass/identity card checking, nearly two in every five people (38%) said they were asked to show their concerned documents by the police always or many times. However, there were also about one in three people who claimed to have rarely or never been asked by police to show their documents while traveling. This possibly hints at the police not keeping a very strict check on people travelling from one place to the another during the lockdown. Further, people in Tier II or III cities were more likely to claim that they had to show their concerned documents each time they stepped out (Figure 5.8).

On undertaking a state-wise analysis it is found that the Andhra Police were the strictest in this regard. Three in every five (59%) common people claimed that they were asked always or many times by the Andhra Police to present their concerned documents while travelling (always- 24%, many times- 35%). On the other hand, travel restrictions in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh seemed to be far more relaxed, with 44 percent and 30 percent of people, respectively, claiming to have never been asked to show their concerned documents.

Figure 5.8 | One in three people were rarely or never asked to show their IDs or documents while travelling during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

*Overall, 18 percent respondents in both Tier I cities and Tier II/III cities said they did not travel when the lockdown was in place. The analysis in the table excludes them.

Questions asked: How often did you have to show your ID card/e-pass to the police while travelling during lockdown- always, many times, a few times, rarely or never?

Perception of inequality with regard to prohibitions

While the majority of common people and police personnel believed that the prohibitions were equal for everybody, a significant proportion believed otherwise. Nearly 30 percent of the general public claimed the rules and regulations were not equally imposed on everyone and that some people easily got away. This should be read with a caveat—this is not based on the actual cases where police favoured one section or were lenient with the other, but the perceptions of common people regarding the fairness of police while imposing the lockdown rules.

The data revealed that those belonging to poor sections of the society as well as residents of big Tier I cities were more likely to believe that the lockdown restrictions were unequal. While two in three (65%) rich citizens believed that restrictions were equal for everyone, among the poor, a much lesser number (56%) thought so (Figure 5.9). Further, Karnataka (43%) and Maharashtra (42%) had the highest proportion of people claiming that restrictions were unequal.

Echoing this perception, almost a quarter of the police personnel also felt that the ‘rich’ section of the society comfortably navigated through the strict rules and regulations of the lockdown. However, as the data suggests, with a gap of nine percentage points, police personnel were more likely to believe that the prohibitions were equal for all, as compared to the general public. The responses were almost

the same across both types of cities, with police personnel deployed in Tier II/III cities slightly more likely to point out inequality (Figure 5.10).

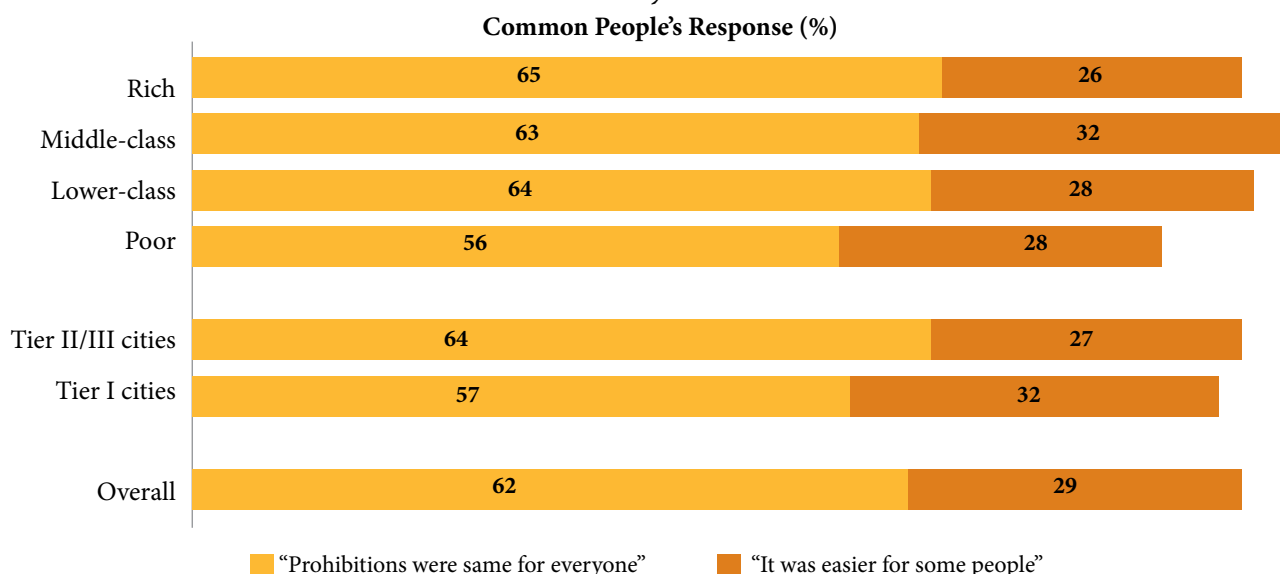
These perceptions of the common people and the police personnel regarding the restrictions being more strictly imposed upon the poorest are also validated through a study based in Madhya Pradesh during the lockdown. The study, which analyses the FIRs filed for the violation of lockdown rules in MP, points out that most of the FIRs were filed against people on the street—pedestrians and persons on two-wheelers. Shopkeepers and street vendors were the second-largest category of ‘offenders’ in the state. The study further demonstrates the presence of bias against marginalised communities—SCs, STs, those belonging to DNT/Nomadic communities and Muslims (Criminal Justice & Police Accountability Project, 2021).

As seen in Chapter 7, the aid workers who were providing relief work on the ground in Delhi-NCR, Gujarat and Rajasthan were also pessimistic of the work done by the police during the lockdown. One in three aid workers from the study believed that the police discriminated a lot against poor people and migrant workers during the lockdown.

Overall, the evidence suggests that the police might be somewhat lenient while dealing with people from higher income groups. As the data indicates, the general inequality in society tends to spill over into the domain of law enforcement, and application of rules of restrictions even

Figure 5.9 | Poor and those living in Tier I cities less likely to believe that lockdown restrictions were equal for all

Was it easy for some people to get away with the restrictions and prohibitions imposed, or were the restrictions same for everyone?

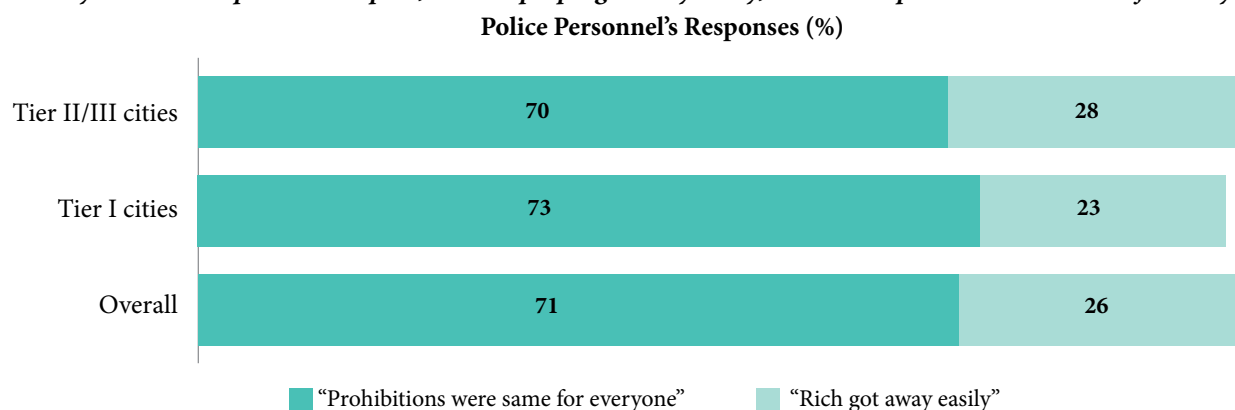


Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: When lockdown was in place, do you think it was easy for some people to get away with the restrictions and prohibitions imposed, or were the restrictions same for everyone?

Figure 5.10 | Nearly three in four police personnel believe that lockdown restrictions were same for everyone

Do you think compared to the poor, the rich people got away easily, or were the prohibitions the same for everyone?



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: When lockdown was in place there were various kind of prohibitions imposed on all the citizens. Do you think compared to the poor, the rich people got away easily, or were the prohibitions the same for everyone?

in extraordinary times when the humanity needs to come together as one.

Image, perception and trust

Covid-19 has posed innumerable challenges before the state, as well as the citizens. In these uncertain times, the police were called upon to perform a new set of duties that went beyond their call of duty. The present section shows how the citizens rated the performance of their police. Based on the responses relating to the image of the police in the minds of citizens, it takes a nuanced look at the relationship between the two, and the impact of Covid-19 on the same.

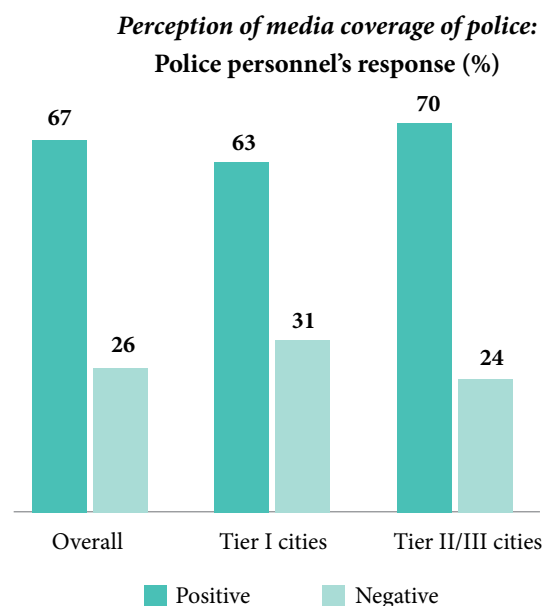
Media Coverage of work done by police: Positive or negative?

While an analysis of the actual media coverage of policing during the pandemic has been presented in Chapter 6, here we look at the police's perception of their media coverage during the pandemic. This, in turn, also impacts the appraisal of the police's work by the people and the improvement or deterioration of the image of the police amongst the common people.

Overall, one-fourth of the police personnel believed that the media showed them in a negative light during the coronavirus outbreak. However, a much higher proportion, comprising a little more than two in every three (67%), felt that the media coverage was positive. A considerable gap of seven percentage points in the opinion of police personnel deployed in Tier I and Tier II/III cities can be noted. Police personnel posted in big Tier I cities were more likely to have a negative perception of how their work was portrayed by the media (Figure 5.11).

Looking at the state-wise perceptions, the police in Bihar and Kerala seemed to be the most satisfied with how the media portrayed them. As many as 95 percent of police personnel in Bihar, and almost a similar proportion of police personnel in Kerala (88%) believed that the media did a positive coverage of their work during the outbreak. On the other end of the spectrum were the Tamil Nadu and Karnataka Police, with 52 percent and 45 percent of police personnel, respectively, perceiving that the media showed them in a poor light.

Figure 5.11 | Police personnel in Tier I cities more likely to believe that their media coverage was negative



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: According to you, during coronavirus outbreak, was the media coverage of police positive or negative?

Image of the police among the common people

This section is devoted to the perceptions of the general public about their respective state police. For two in every three people, the overall image of the police has improved on the basis of the work done by them during the pandemic. For one in every four, it still remains the same as pre-Covid-19 times. Six percent reported that the image of the police deteriorated post-Covid. The image of the police relatively improved a little more among the people living in Tier I cities (Figure 5.12).

Segregating the responses state-wise, we see that some state police forces fared better than the others. Andhra Pradesh Police and Delhi Police seemed to have impressed the common people the most, with 89 percent and 79 percent, respectively, saying that after the pandemic, the image of their police improved. At the other end was Tamil Nadu, where one fourth (26%) of common people were found to have a negative perception of the work done by police. They felt that the image of their state police has deteriorated based on how they performed during the pandemic.

Overall, going by the data, this is a rather positive development for the police force, which seems to have performed fairly well during the Covid-19 outbreak. This is despite the reports of police violence during the pandemic, some of which included news of custodial deaths as a result of violation of lockdown rules by the common people. Overall, such incidents did not create a dent in the image of the work of the police during the pandemic. However, noticeably, one of the cases which captured a lot of media and public attention was that of the custodial deaths of a fa-

ther-son duo in Tamil Nadu, Jeyaraj and Beniks (*The Times of India*, 2020). This could possibly have had an impact on the image of the police in Tamil Nadu, the state which had the highest proportion of people (26%) reporting that the image of the police has deteriorated after the pandemic.

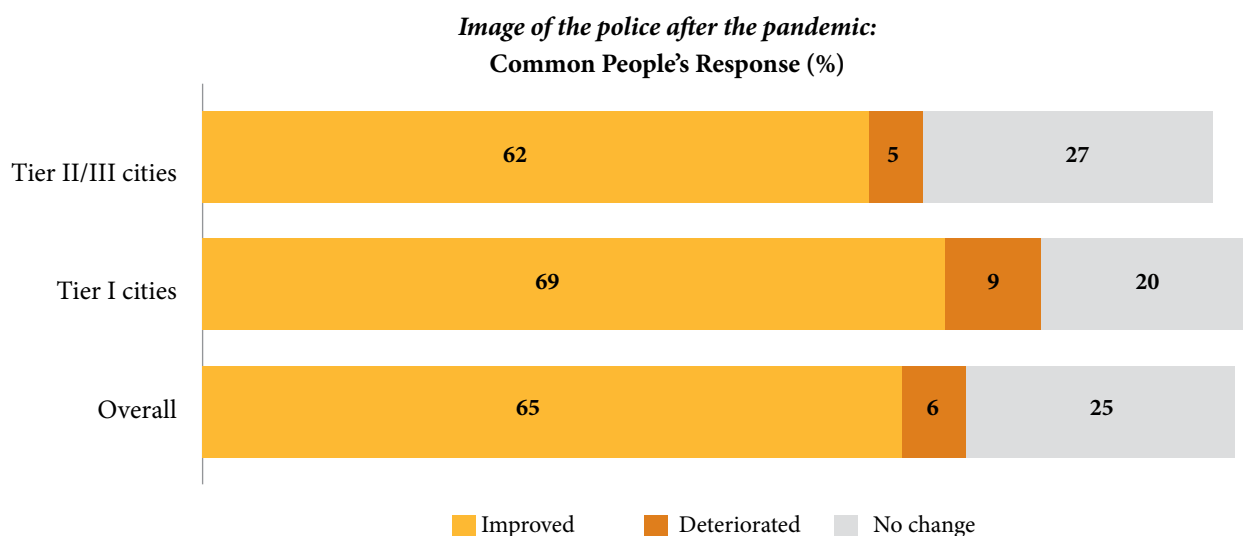
People's perception of the increased police presence

A very large section of people felt secure due to the increased presence of police in various public places during the lockdown. As shown in Figure 5.13, nearly three fourths of the people reported that they were feeling secure with relatively large number of police personnel deployed on the roads, market areas, hospitals, and other public spaces. It is perhaps also important to highlight that about one-fifth of the general people looked at it as a threat, and were uncomfortable with the increased police presence. This was far more in Tier I cities as compared to Tier II/III cities. While nearly one in four people in Tier I cities felt threatened, 15 percent felt threatened by increased policing (8 percentage points lesser) in Tier II/III cities.

Andhra Pradesh and Delhi again recorded the highest proportion of people satisfied with the increased policing, with 94 percent and 89 percent people respectively claiming to feel secure. On the other hand, Tamil Nadu had close to two in every five (39%) citizens feeling the opposite. In Karnataka, a little over one fourth (27%) reported feeling threatened.

Comparing the respondents across four income-groups, the poor were slightly more likely to have felt threatened

Figure 5.12 | Two out of three people feel that the image of police has improved after the pandemic, more so in Tier I cities



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: After the coronavirus pandemic, in your mind, has the image of the police improved, deteriorated or remained the same?

due to the increased surveillance by the police during the lockdown (Figure 5.13).

Perception on the best and the worst tasks performed by the police

During the pandemic, the police were given various kinds of tasks and duties. They were given the responsibility of keeping people at home and ensuring that they follow all rules and regulations imposed after the lockdown. In addition, they supervised the sanitisation of public spaces, and were almost in charge of handling the migrant crisis by providing food and shelter to them, besides other marginalised sections. This was in addition to their regular duties and routine work. With this expanded work portfolio, how well did the police handle the crisis? While some tables above have already underlined the high satisfaction levels among people with their police, this section focusses on the particular police duties or tasks which stood out.

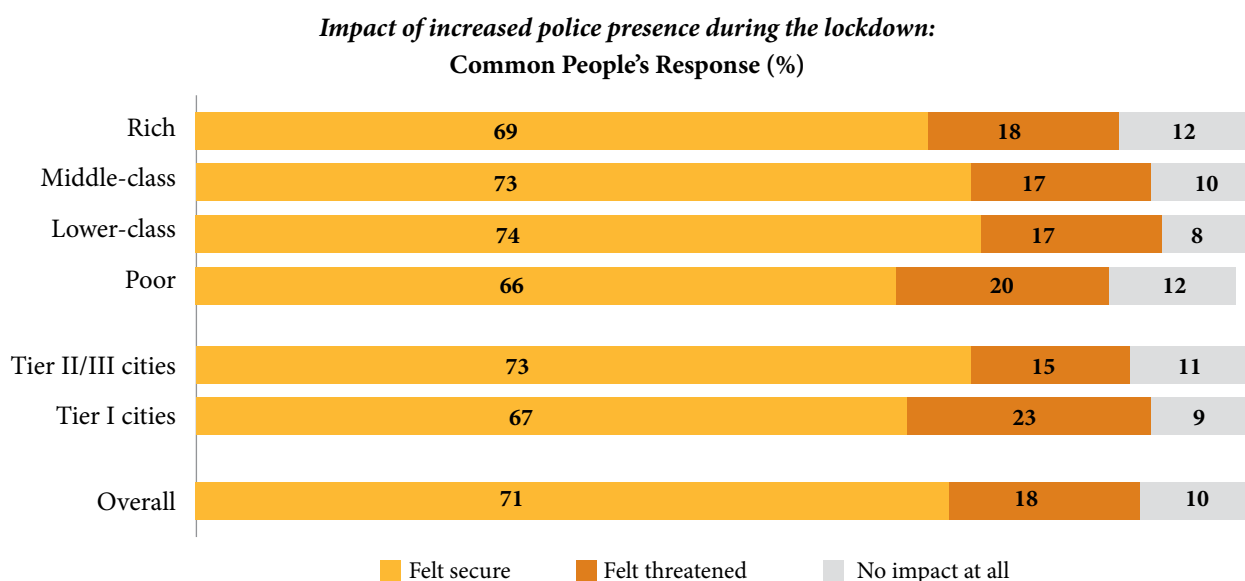
Common people were asked to name just one task or duty which the police performed really well and another in which they completely failed. Based on their perception of police performance, providing necessary help to people in need was rated the highest. More than one-fifth of the common people reported it to be the best task performed by the police during the outbreak. Police help referred to providing basic items like food and medicine to the poor, arranging for shelters for migrant laborers and facilitating their homeward journey, and issuing travel-passes to the general public. People in the big Tier I cities, where help of

this nature was crucial, were more likely to rate this as the best-performed task by the police (Table 5.3).

Further, while about one in every 10 (12%) people felt that the police did their best in ‘ensuring proper implementation of lockdown rules and regulations,’ about the same proportion (11%) rated ‘communication with the general public’ about keeping them informed about the lockdown prohibitions as the best-performed police duty (Table 5.3). Looking at the other end of the spectrum, more than one-fifth of the people felt that the police disappointed them the most in performing their general or routine duty. This includes keeping a check on crime, public-dealing, maintaining law and order, general patrolling of different areas of the city and other day-to-day tasks (Table 5.4). Common people in Andhra Pradesh, Delhi and Karnataka were more likely to feel this gap in police responsibilities, with 42 percent in Andhra Pradesh and 32 percent in Delhi and Karnataka reporting the same.

It certainly indicates that the additional burden of managing the Covid-19 crisis and consequential lockdowns strongly impacted normal policing. However, it must be highlighted that more than half of the general public did not give any response when asked to name one task in which the police failed completely. This is far more than the proportion of people who responded to naming one task in which the police were best at. This, perhaps, hints at a fair level of satisfaction among the general public on the work done by the police during Covid-19.

Figure 5.13 | While nearly three in four felt secure, poor and people from Tier I cities more likely to feel threatened by increased police presence during lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: During lockdown, many police personnel were deployed in various public places. Did their presence make you feel secure or did you feel threatened by their presence?

Trust in police

Finally, when asked if their trust in police increased or decreased after seeing how law enforcement was carried out during the coronavirus outbreak, a positive response emerged. A very high proportion of common people – two in three – reported that their trust in the police has improved. While merely nine percent said that their trust

level has come down, about a quarter reported that it was the same as it was before the disease outbreak (Figure 5.14).

Andhra Pradesh and Delhi Police again emerged as the most trusted police forces among the surveyed states, with 83 percent and 79 percent of people respectively reporting an increased trust in their police, after their performance

Table 5.3 | Best of police: More than one in five believe police did their best in providing help to the needy

Evaluating tasks performed by the police during the lockdown: Common People's Response (%)			
One task/duty in which police 'performed well' during the coronavirus outbreak	Overall	Tier I cities	Tier II or III cities
Providing help to people in need (poor and migrants)	22	27	19
Proper implementation of lockdown rules & regulations	12	12	11
Communication with public	11	9	13
General or routine duty	10	8	12
Ensuring sanitisation & providing masks	6	6	6
Treating people with respect, dignity and equality	4	5	4
Helping Covid-19 patients	2	3	2
Any other lockdown/ Covid-specific duty	2	2	3
No response	30	29	31

Note: All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: If you have to name just one task/duty in which police did really well during the coronavirus outbreak, what would that be?

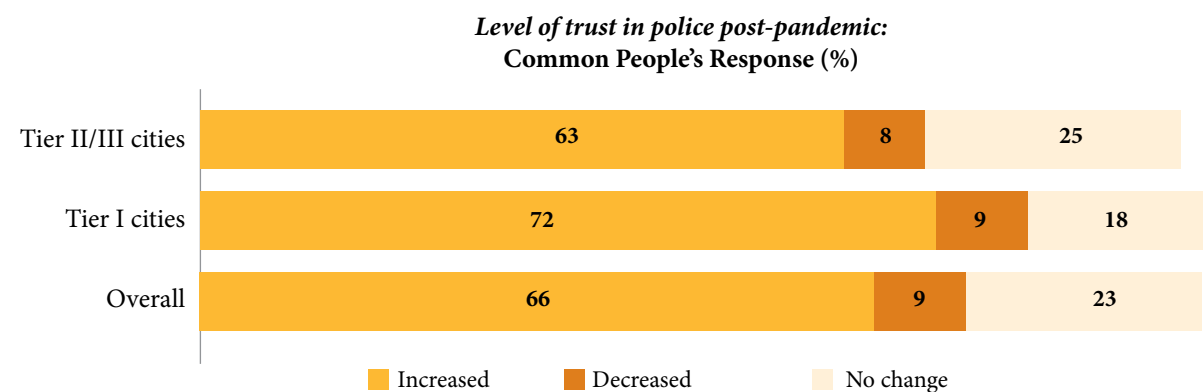
Table 5.4 | Worst of the police: More than one in five felt police did their worst in (neglecting) their general or routine duties

Evaluating tasks performed by the police during the lockdown: Common People's Response (%)			
One task/duty the police 'failed at' during the coronavirus outbreak	Overall	Tier I cities	Tier II or III cities
General or routine duty	21	21	21
Providing help to people in need (poor and migrants)	9	11	7
Ensuring sanitisation & providing masks	5	5	5
Proper implementation of lockdown rules & regulations	3	3	4
Communication with public	3	1	4
Any other lockdown/ Covid-specific duty	2	2	3
Treating people with respect, dignity and equality	2	3	1
Helping Covid-19 patients	1	1	1
No response	55	54	55

Note: All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: According to you, what would be that one task/duty in which the police failed at completely?

Figure 5.14 | Two in three people report increased trust levels in police post-Covid; more so in Tier I cities



Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off.

Questions asked: Considering how they performed during the coronavirus outbreak, has your trust in the police increased or decreased?

during the lockdown. Karnataka Police was not far behind, with 77 percent of people claiming to trust their police even more. However, Tamil Nadu again was an outlier, with 34 percent of people saying that their trust level in their police has gone down after the pandemic. At 18 percent, Bihar also recorded a relatively high proportion of people having the same opinion, while about half or 51 percent reported that there was no change in their level of trust.

Conclusion

It is true that the police in India went through a transformative time in history, as they had to completely reinvent themselves to tackle a population on the edge of fear. Their lack of preparedness, owing to the sudden announcement of a nation-wide shutdown, put them in a position of great disadvantage. Absence of any prior pandemic handling training was also a crucial setback against a virus that was already rampaging the most developed nations of the world. Despite the insurmountable odds—handling the exodus of impoverished migrant workers, imposing draconian restrictions across a vast nation, the numbing threat to their own health and those of their family members—the police have been perceived to have done a good job. They seem to be enjoying the support and confidence of citizens, without exceptional scrutiny of their new role. The chapter discussed various aspects of interaction between police and citizens during the Covid-19 outbreak and the consequential lockdowns.

To sum up, *firstly*, even amidst extreme chaos and disarray, the police seem to have effectively communicated relevant messages on lockdown regulations to the public. They shared information regarding the virus through various mediums, while running awareness campaigns across the country. However, social media could have been used much more effectively when almost the entire population of the country was home-bound.

Secondly, to help the citizens in these challenging times, police personnel in the surveyed cities seem to have gone well beyond their call of duty. As a result, a huge proportion of the general public rated police personnel highly on their efficiency. This is rather impressive, considering the minuscule funds for preventive policing, community policing and citizen outreach programmes, and lack of training and experience of police personnel specifically in tackling health emergencies.

Thirdly, in an atmosphere of unmitigated panic, and a slew of restrictions, policing appeared an unenviable task. This did not escape the notice of the general public, who seem to be sympathising with the plight of the police personnel. Half of the common people felt that it was not easy

for the police to manage the public during the lockdown while simultaneously ensuring their safety and security from a highly contagious virus. A significant proportion also pointed out the increased health risk to police personnel themselves. However, misgivings persisted in the police personnel's handling of people while checking documents during the lockdown. One-third of the general public reported that they were either rarely or never asked to show their concerned travel documents. About the same proportion also pointed out the leniency of the police while dealing with certain categories of citizens (rich and influential in particular), making it relatively easier for them to navigate prohibitions. This view was echoed by a quarter of the police personnel as well.

Lastly, for two in every three citizens, the image of the police improved after seeing their work during the pandemic. With increased visibility of the police in public spaces, three in four people reported feeling secure. However, about one in five felt threatened for the same reason. The feeling of being threatened was augmented among the poor, indicating the negative consequences of increased policing.

Across the states, the perception of the police post-pandemic seems to be the best in Andhra Pradesh and Delhi. Common people from AP are most likely to report that the police was highly efficient in controlling the coronavirus outbreak (64%). Eighty-nine percent people from AP and 79 percent from Delhi feel that the image of the police has improved post-pandemic. More than nine out of 10 people in both states felt secure with increased police presence during the lockdown and for four out of five people in the two states, the level of trust has increased after the pandemic.

On the other hand, the state which appears to have the worst image amongst the common people during the pandemic is Tamil Nadu, with the highest proportion of people from the state feeling that the police were not at all efficient in controlling the outbreak of Covid-19 (17%). Common people from the state were also most likely to report the lack of use of any medium of communication by the police during the lockdown. About one out of two police personnel from TN felt that the media portrayed them in a negative light during the lockdown, while one out of four common people believed that the image of the police had deteriorated following the pandemic. Nearly two out of five (39%) people felt threatened by the increased police presence during the lockdown in TN and for 34 percent of the people, the level of trust had decreased post-Covid-19. The negative perception of the police in TN could be related to the custodial deaths of a father-son duo during the lockdown, an incident which was widely reported in both

the local as well as national media and brought the spotlight on police violence in the country.

Further, the police in Tier II/III cities enjoyed a better perception amongst the people, compared to those in Tier I cities. People from the former were more likely to report that the police were highly efficient in controlling the Covid-19 outbreak. A higher proportion of people from Tier II/III cities also believed that the police were highly capable of handling the pandemic and that they controlled the situation well despite a sudden lockdown. On the other hand, people from Tier I cities were more likely to believe that the lockdown restrictions were unequally imposed on the people. Those from Tier I cities were also more likely to feel threatened by the increased police presence during the lockdown. Police personnel from these cities are also more likely to have a negative perception about the media's portrayal of the police work during the lockdown. However, people in Tier I cities were more likely to report increased level of trust in the police following the lockdown, as compared to the people in Tier II/III cities.

There is also a visible difference in the perception of the police across classes. Poor people were less likely to believe that the police were efficient in controlling the Covid-19 outbreak. On the other hand, they are more likely to believe that the prohibitions imposed during the lockdown were not equal for everyone. The poor felt more threatened by the increased police presence during the lockdown, compared to other economic classes. Awareness campaigns undertaken by the police also appear to be limited to more affluent neighbourhoods, with fewer poor people reporting to have witnessed such campaigns.

Overall, the virus seems to have improved the relationship between the police and the citizens during the lockdown, with two in three reporting increased levels of trust on the basis of police performance, notwithstanding isolated incidents of police brutality. This certainly indicates a positive role played by the police during the Covid-19 outbreak and the lockdowns. The police, during this specific period, was seen as a crucial interface between the government and the citizens, with escalating vulnerabilities in the face of an out-of-control virus.

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Through the Lens of the Media: *Policing in Extraordinary Circumstances*

A police officer threatening a passerby with a stick for allegedly breaking the lockdown rules in Kolkata, India.
©OUTLOOK/Sandipan Chatterjee.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A good amount of coverage by the media regarding police during the lockdown, one out of four news stories, was about incidents of lockdown violation and the consequent actions taken by the police. More than half of these news stories were reported within a month of the lockdown.
- The highest proportion of stories about assaults on the police personnel was also reported in the first month after the lockdown.
- News reports suggest significant governmental pressure on the police for a very strict imposition of the lockdown norms using whatever means deemed necessary.
- Media stories strongly reflect the expanded role of the police during the lockdown. The police in almost all the states were involved in distributing food and essential supplies during the initial weeks. Also widely covered were reports of innovative policing, i.e. cops singing, dancing, running creative health awareness campaigns; distributing masks, medicines, etc. to the needy; paying surprise visits to citizens' houses and celebrating their birthdays etc.
- Nearly one out of 10 news stories from the sample reports the police excesses and negligence during the lockdown. It is evident in media reports that migrant workers were most likely to be at the receiving end of police brutality during this period.
- Media also reported that the police extensively used advance surveillance tools like drone cameras, face detection technology, GPS enabled systems like geofencing, etc. to enforce the lockdown. The growing reliance on advanced technology for policing received high praise from the media but few questions were raised pertaining to their legality, adherence to regulations, and data protection methods during this time.
- The analysis of media reports showed little to no critical assessment of the government policies or the police behaviour during the lockdown. While content analysis of the slant of media stories was not done in this study, the general analysis revealed few critical reports, except in cases of extreme police brutality such as in custodial deaths.

Through the Lens of the Media: *Policing in Extraordinary Circumstances*

Media, as disseminator of information and commentator of current proceedings, plays a vital role in democracy. Political slants of media organisations, which are often reflected in their editorial positions, influence their day-to-day coverage. However, its potential to influence public opinion has never been in doubt. Media's role became even more crucial during the pandemic when public mobility was restricted and access to information remained unequal. Its primary role of arming citizens with essential information to make rational decisions became even more evident in the early days of the lockdown.

During this phase, reporting on the coronavirus and its fallouts from the ground allowed people to make sense of the loss of lives, livelihoods and freedoms. Restrictions on movement also increased our dependence on the media to get us all the news around a disease that left the world buzzing with anxiety. Not surprisingly, the stringent stay-at-home orders and over-dependence on the media exponentially increased its potential to influence public opinion. Citizens' understanding of the role of the police during the lockdown was also understandably based more on news reports by legacy media outlets or viral social media posts rather than on personal experiences.

In such extraordinary times, traditional media retained its prime position as a trusted source of authentic 'news' globally despite the fact that the digital media generated unprecedented consumer attention and respect. This trend was visible in India as well. As per the C-Voter media consumption survey carried out in 2020, print continues to be seen as the most important source of information for 66% of Indian readers, in spite of the proliferation of and the buzz around digital media and the high-pitched debates on news television (CVoter Media Consumption Survey, 2020).

Given such importance of event coverages by traditional media, and its influence on public opinion, this chapter

uses media as an instrument to understand different aspects of policing during the lockdown. The primary objective of this study is to make sense of the role of the police through the eyes of the media and bring out the contours of policing activities, as widely covered by it. The study also looks at the coverage of media critically and tries to highlight its omissions and commissions during the process.

Data selection and methodology

The scope of the study is restricted to two each of English and Hindi newspapers with some of the highest readerships. We have selected the newspapers after considering both their readership figures as well as the ease of accessing their digital content. Therefore, *The Times of India* and *The Indian Express* from English and *Dainik Jagran* and *Dainik Bhaskar* from Hindi were selected. The study uses media reports on policing during the lockdown as a tool to understand their role in managing and preventing the public health crisis. For the same reason, the study does not limit itself to print editions of the selected newspapers. All the news reports which were digitally published and available on the official websites of the respective media outlets were considered for the study. News reports were selected using the keyword search method. Words such as 'policing,' 'cops,' and 'police' were used for English newspapers while 'पुलिस' and 'पुलिसकर्मी,' along with English keywords, were used for the Hindi media. News reports related to the ongoing pandemic, featuring any one of the above keywords in their text, were considered for the analysis.

The time frame of the study was April 1, 2020, to June 30, 2020. It covers all the phases of the national lockdown which lasted till May 30, 2020. For content analysis, an elaborate coding sheet was prepared on the basis of a pilot conducted on the same newspapers before initiating data collection. The idea of the pilot was to have as many categories of elements related to policing during the pandemic that can be studied as possible. However, demand and possible limitations of the study were also considered while

Note: The study was conducted during the months of October and November in 2020, and therefore, it is confined to the first wave of the Covid-19 and the first phase of the consequential lockdown(s) that were imposed in 2020.

constructing categories. All the categories were operationally defined and news reports were sorted accordingly. Since the focus of the study is limited to policing during the pandemic, other crime-related news reports were not included in the final sample. There was a possibility that a news report could fall under multiple categories. To avoid such overlaps, coders were instructed to consider only the primary category of the news report.

Following are the categories created:

1. Peripheral and non-policing activities performed by the police during the lockdown
2. Police affected due to Covid-19
3. Lockdown violations and police action
4. Awareness campaigns and special initiatives by police
5. Police excesses and negligence
6. Use of technology for lockdown-related reasons
7. Attack on police personnel
8. The police/ police personnel praised and/ or rewarded
9. Orders issued for the police by their superiors, and
10. Orders issued by the police for the general public.

Reports mentioning the police but not fitting into any of the above categories were clubbed as miscellaneous reports.

Analysis

Overall trends of reporting on policing during the pandemic

As per the Oxford Covid-19 Government Response Tracker (OxCGRT) India experienced the strictest lockdown in the world (Thomas Hale, 2021) and its management fell mainly in the hands of the police forces. This is also reflected in the share of media reports about policing during the initial phase of the lockdown. In the selected time frame i.e., from April 1, 2020, to June 30, 2020, as many as 54 news reports related to Covid-19 that mentioned the police were published on an average by four newspapers ev-

ery day. Between April 1 and May 31, which covers nearly nine out of total 10 weeks of the nationwide lockdown, the average went above 64 news reports per day. Out of the total 4896 news reports, 1781 (36 %) were reported in the first three weeks of April which is more than double the number of stories reported during June. Between June 3 and June 30 which largely covers the first month after the nationwide lockdown, 805 news reports (16 %) were published. Week-wise distribution of the reports indicates that April, particularly the period between April 8 and April 21, was the most significant, in the context of the role of the police during the pandemic being highlighted by the media. During this phase, the maximum number of news stories were reported under most of the categories described above. This was also the period when the 21-day-long lockdown was about to get over and the government decided to extend it by two more weeks amid speculations. As *Figure 6.1* indicates, after reaching the peak in the second and the third week, the number of news reports declined steadily. It is important to understand that, barring a few exceptions, this trend remains similar across all categories.

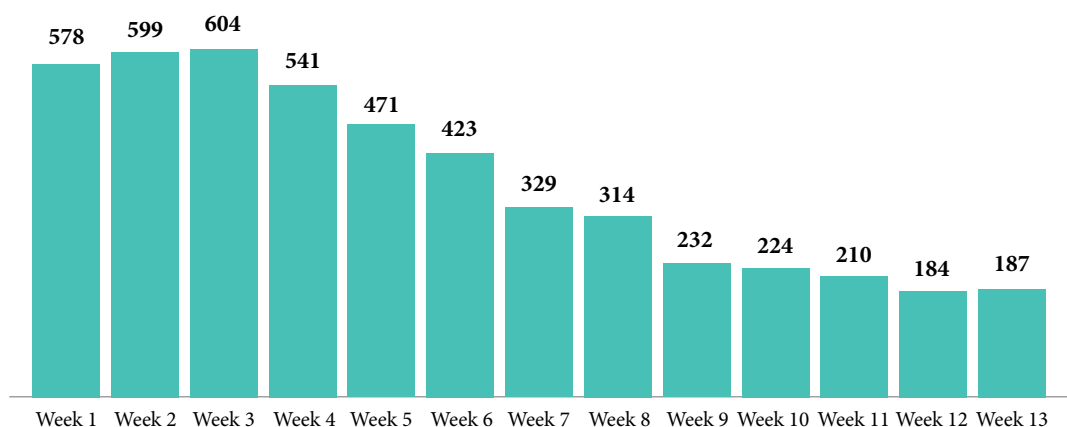
Types of media coverage: Thematic categories

Of the total 4896 news reports collected during this period, 3843 reports were selected for further analysis based on thematic categories. The remaining news stories were categorised as 'miscellaneous'.

A percentage-wise distribution (shown in *Figure 6.2*) indicates that the maximum number of news stories were reported under the 'Lockdown violation and police action' category. One out of four news stories from the sample are about instances of lockdown violation and the consequent police action.

This is followed by stories on 'Police affected due to Covid-19' and 'Police excesses and negligence'. Six hundred and seventy (17%) and 448 (12%) news stories fell under these categories respectively. The least number of stories

Figure 6.1 | Total number of news reports on policing during the pandemic



were reported on the police's use of technology, with only three percent of the sample containing reports of the use of advanced technology for effective policing during the lockdown.

Primary access point for state services

While the police are primarily responsible for crime investigation, prosecution and maintaining law and order, but during the lockdown, they were acting as one of the front-line state agents responsible for performing a host of tasks beyond their usual scope of duties. From ration distribution and undertaking awareness campaigns to enforcing lockdown norms and providing healthcare support—the range of work that fell upon the police force during the period was well beyond the scope of 'normal' policing. Media reports also reflected this expanded role of the police, with about seven percent reports from the sample falling within the category of 'peripheral and non-policing activities performed by the police'.

At least 278 news stories of police performing peripheral and non-policing activities were reported by the four newspapers. Maximum number of news stories were reported in the second and third week of April i.e., during the last week of the first phase and the first week of the second phase of the nationwide lockdown. Week-wise trends clearly show that after maintaining the peak in the initial weeks of the lockdown, the numbers steadily go down and further drop after week 9 i.e., towards the end of the lockdown.

News articles suggest that the police in almost all the states were involved in distributing food and essential supplies during the initial weeks of the lockdown. Multiple reports of the police initiating community kitchens for the needy, especially for migrant workers were found (*Indian Express*,

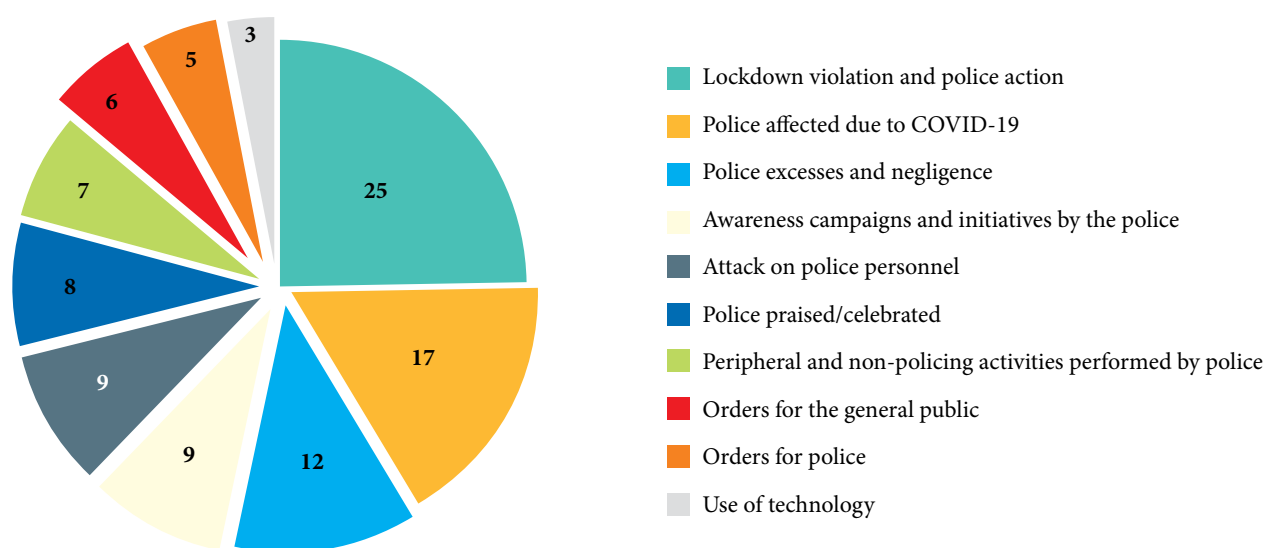
2020). Reports of the police providing emergency medical assistance were also prominently seen. Police, in general offered all sorts of help to the citizens. In UP's Chandauli, it even hosted an emergency wedding at the police station premises (Chakravarty, 2020). Incidents of police officials paying surprise visits to citizens' houses and celebrating their birthdays were frequently reported by the media. They were also running health awareness campaigns, distributing masks and medicines. Going by the reports, it is quite evident that, right from assisting pregnant women and celebrating birthdays of citizens to performing last rituals of the deceased, the police were seen everywhere.

Though a majority of news reports on police performing non-policing activities were reported in the initial days of the lockdown, some reports from June suggest that they also played a crucial role in reducing the fallouts of the nation-wide shutdown. In the industrial regions, they were involved in getting more local youth employed in the factories to address the workforce shortage following the migrant exodus. In Maharashtra's Aurangabad, the police were told to contact industrial houses and note down their requirements of skilled and unskilled workers under community policing initiatives. Local youths were encouraged to take up vacant positions (Akhef, 2020).

Use of excessive force and conflict between police and the people

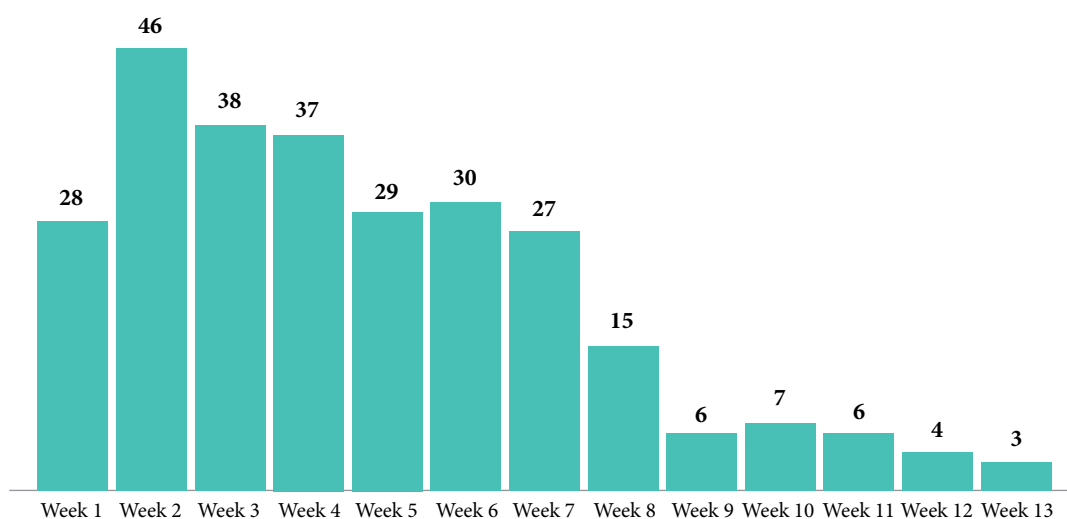
Right from the imposition of the lockdown, the police were seen dealing with it as a 'law-and-order situation' rather than a health emergency crisis. This can be observed in the media reports as well. The highest number of news stories were reported under this category. A total of 953 news stories on lockdown violation and police action were reported in the span of three months. However, more than half of

Figure 6.2 | Categorisation of news reports about the police during the pandemic (%)



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Figure 6.3 | Reports of police performing peripheral and non-policing activities



them were reported in April alone. As *Figure 6.4* indicates, maximum stories were reported in the first two weeks of April. Between April 1 and April 15, four newspapers published over 20 news stories per day in which instances of lockdown violation and actions taken by the police were covered.

A large number of news stories on the strictness of the police against lockdown guideline violators were reported during the initial phases of the lockdown. In particular, stories on police arresting people, seizing vehicles and imposing fines were reported frequently. There were also stories on the police hitting violators with *lathis* and making them do sit-ups and squats as corporal punishments.

Notably, news reports suggest that apart from directives pertaining to the lockdown guidelines, there was significant governmental pressure on the police for the intense imposition of the lockdown using whatever means deemed necessary (*The Times of India*, 2020).

Corona effect : लॉकडाउन को सफल बनाने के लिए पुलिस हुई सख्त, चटकाई लाठियां, कराए उठक-बैठक



Publish Date: Fri, 03 Apr 2020 04:45 PM (IST) | Author: Dillip Shukla

News source: (*Dainik Jagran*, 2020)

Overall, the data collected from four newspapers indicates that the police from most of the states identified 'punishment' as the most effective way to enforce the lockdown rules. Multiple news reports published after the nationwide lockdown give details of people detained for violation of lockdown rules and the amount collected as violation fines by the police (Kulkarni, 2020).

On certain occasions, police have also resorted to the use of brute force. At least 448 stories of police excesses and negligence during the lockdown were reported by the newspapers. One out of 10 news stories from the selected sample were identified under this category, of which nearly 45 percent were reported in April. Going by the news reports, it is evident that migrant workers faced police excesses the most. Initially, each state had a different approach towards migrant exodus and accordingly instructions were given to the police. However, this led to chaos. A number of clashes between migrants and the police were reported, especially

Pune: Morning walkers, joggers run into trouble with cops for defying order

Asseem Shaikh & Gitesh Shelke / TNN / Updated: Apr 17, 2020, 07:13 IST



Police take action against walkers and joggers in Swargate on Thursday.

News source: (*The Times of India*, 2020)

at inter-state borders. In one incident, the police forces of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan also clashed with each other on the issue of allowing migrants to enter Uttar Pradesh. This incident occurred near Mathura, when migrant workers from Rajasthan tried to enter U.P. to go to their home states Bihar and Jharkhand. Several police officers got injured in the tussle (*Dainik Bhaskar*, 2020). Most of the stories on police beating and harassing migrant workers were reported during the second and third phases of the lockdown (April 15 to May 17).

Week-wise trend for this category more or less remains similar to the overall trend except week 13 (June 24 to June 30) when a sudden spike in the number of news reports can be seen. The spike occurred because of the Thoothukudi incident where a father-son duo was picked up by the police for violating lockdown guidelines and allegedly tortured to death in the police custody (*The Times of India*, 2020). On June 19, in Sathankulam, a small town in

Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, P Jayaraj and his son J Bennix, owners of a mobile shop, were picked up by the police for allegedly keeping the shop open beyond the permitted time. Both were taken into custody and allegedly tortured to death. Accounts of eyewitnesses and the autopsy report brought out horrific details of brutality that sparked public outrage. The Madurai Bench of Madras High Court took suo motu cognisance of the matter and ordered an immediate enquiry. Multiple police officials were suspended and district revenue officials were ordered to take over the police station. This episode was widely covered by the media.

Repercussions of stern and inhumane police action were seen on the ground. Reports indicate an alarming increase in the number of assaults on police personnel that left hundreds injured. At least 329 such stories were reported by four newspapers. Out of these, 184 (56%) were reported in April. Interestingly, reports of police action against lockdown violators and police excesses were also the highest in

Figure 6.4 | Reports of lockdown violation and police action

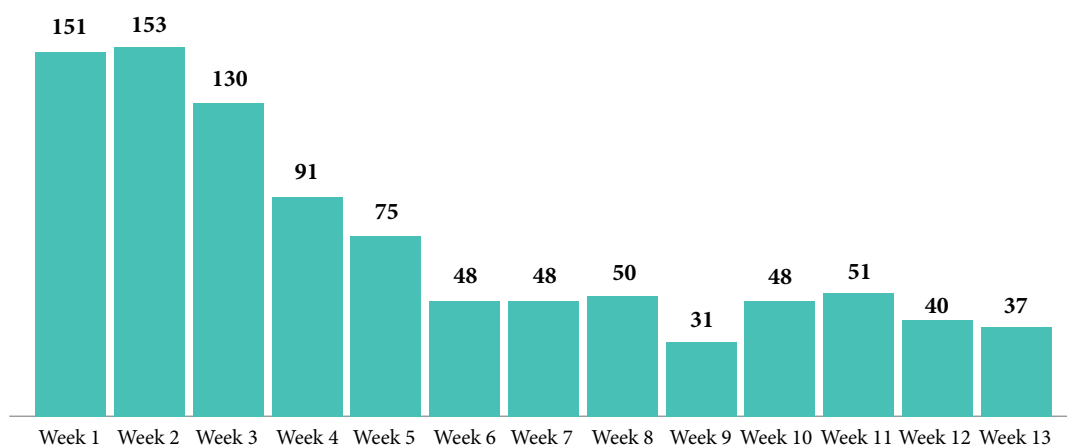
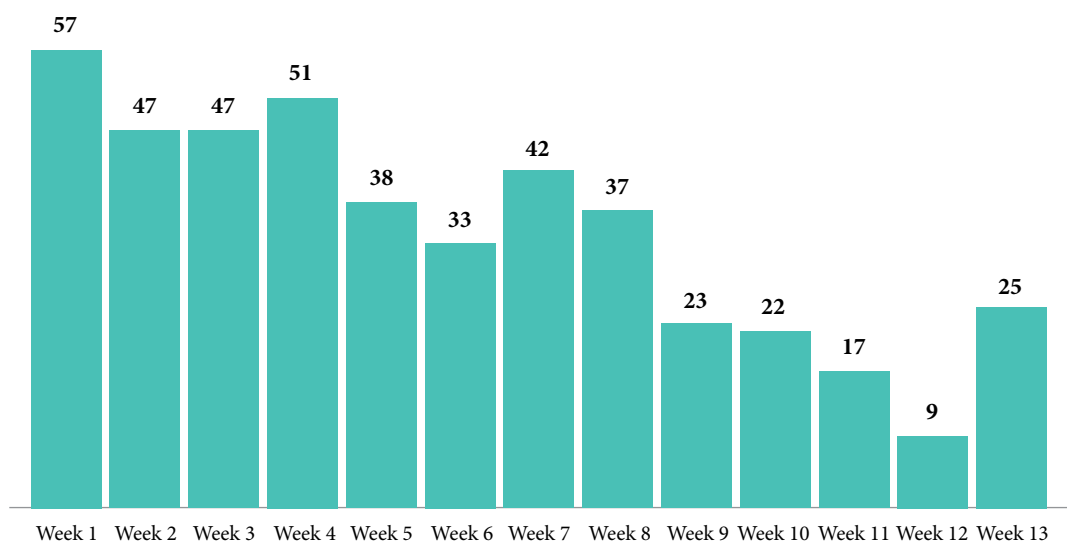


Figure 6.5 | Reports of police excesses and negligence



April. After the initial few weeks, reports of attacks on police personnel show a sharp decline. In June, only 12 such stories were reported. Among all the incidents of attack on police personnel reported in April, nearly 20 per cent were of stone-pelting. In a majority of cases, skirmishes broke out over violation of lockdown guidelines that later resulted in attacks on police personnel (*Dainik Bhaskar*, 2020). On multiple occasions, migrant workers who were struggling to get food and were desperate to go back to their home states ‘attacked’ police personnel on being denied these options. One of the most violent clashes was reported from Surat, where a mob of nearly 3000 migrant workers vandalised properties and attacked cops with acid bottles. A group of workers, including women, managed to reach the state border but were sent back by the police. Furious with the police action, workers resorted to heavy stone-pelting and vandalising vehicles. Police were forced to use tear gas and resorted to lathi charge to control the angry mob. As reported by the media, some migrant workers felt that they were treated as terrorists by the police. Frustrated with this humiliating experience, some of them declared that they will never come back to work in Gujarat (*The Times of India*, 2020).

to human life, health, safety or violent riots, the imprisonment shall be up to six months or fine up to ₹ 1000 or both. These fine amounts are outdated now.

लॉकडाउन 3.0: प्रतिबंध के बाद भी बिना कारण घर से निकले पंडितजी, पुलिस ने बीच सड़क पर पीटी और एक्ससाइज करवाई

इंदौर एक वर्ष पहले



पंडित जी ने स्वीकारा कि कोई महत्वपूर्ण काम नहीं होने के बाद भी वे घर से निकले और यह उनकी गलती है।

- पकड़ में आए लोगों में कोई सब्जी लेने घर से निकला तो किसी ने कहा - परिचित या रिश्तेदार के यहां काम से जा रहे

टोटल लॉकडाउन के बाद भी लोग घरों से निकलने से बाज नहीं आ रहे हैं। शहर में सबसे ज्यादा सख्ती एरोड्रम क्षेत्र में सुबह की जा रही है। इसी के चलते शुक्रवार सुबह कई लोगों को पकड़ा। पुलिस की सख्ती में पंडित भी फंस गए। टीआई अशोक पाटीदार के अनुसार जब पुलिस ने रोका

News source: (Dainik Bhaskar, 2020)

इंतहा: लॉकडाउन तोड़ने वालों को गिरफ्तारी का नहीं डर, बॉन्ड भरवाकर छोड़ रही पुलिस इसलिए भी लोग बरत रहे लापरवाही

दिल्ली एक वर्ष पहले



(नीरज आर्या) दिल्ली में कोरोना वायरस के शिकार लोगों की संख्या तेजी से बढ़ रही है, इस सबके बाद भी लोग लॉकडाउन के नियमों का ठीक से पालन नहीं कर रहे। इन लोगों के खिलाफ पुलिस लगातार मुकदमे तो दर्ज कर रही है, किंतु ऐसे मामले में कोई सख्त कानूनी प्रावधान नहीं होने से लोगों पर इसका ज्यादा असर नहीं हो रहा।

आज हालात ऐसे बन चुके हैं कानून अपने हाथ में लेने वाले लोगों को पुलिस थाने भी ले जाने से बच रह रहा है। संक्रमण फैलने और सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग को ध्यान में रख मौके पर ही आरोपियों के

News source: (Dainik Bhaskar, 2020)

jarat CM could be changed due to the rising number of Covid-19 cases in the state. Multiple journalists were summoned for their reports and at least nine were beaten up by the police. The report says that the crackdown on journalists during the Covid-19 lockdown shows the fragile atmosphere in which the media is operating in India. However, apart from a few exceptions, most of these cases of police

atrocities against journalists were not covered by the print or digital platforms of the selected national dailies.

Adapting new methods and growing reliance on technology

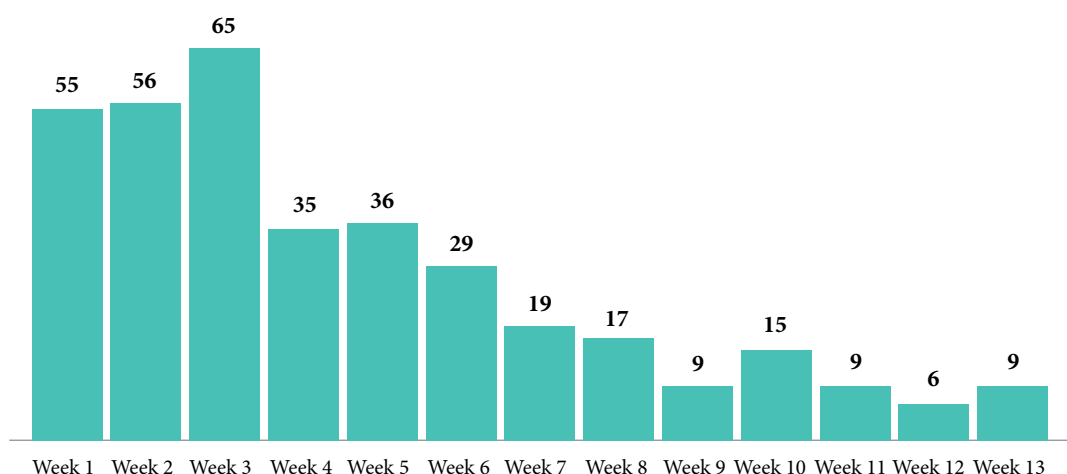
Along with regular policing, police officials were also at the forefront of public health awareness campaigns. Their role in creating awareness about the pandemic was quite visible and was prominently showcased in the news reports as well. About nine percent news reports elaborated on the campaigns by police to generate awareness and their special initiatives for the effective implementation of the lockdown.

For the awareness campaigns, heavy reliance on social media can be observed. Multiple news stories of police effectively using social media for dissemination of information were reported. On the ground, the police also tried several innovative and creative ways to reach out to the people, along with frequent flag marches. Composing and singing songs as well as organising drawing and essay writing competitions to encourage people to stay indoors were part of their outreach activities. Some police personnel also acknowledged that they used lockdown as a chance to express their creative side which often gets sidelined (Banka, 2020).

Some news stories during the initial phases revealed that the police also took help from locals for the effective implementation of the lockdown guidelines. In some cases, special titles like 'Police Mitra' (friend of police) were given to these people (Dainik Bhaskar, 2020). Locals were given the task of providing essential supplies to the community and assisting police officials in enforcing lockdown guidelines. As the reports suggest, the move was an attempt to overcome the workforce crunch during an extraordinary situation.

As in all other aspects of life and work, the pandemic precipitated the use of technology by the police as well, also indicated in the news reports. What was interesting, however, was the advance technological tools extensively used by the police to enforce the lockdown. Use of tools like face detection cameras (scanning multiple people and providing real-time alerts about people without masks), and GPS enabled technologies like geofencing (tracking people in quarantine and alerting authorities when they ventured outdoors) were frequently reported. In many places, the police admitted that they used these tools for the first time and found them to be quite useful. For example, in Thrissur, Kerala initially six face detection cameras were installed in different parts of the town. These cameras were used to identify people not using face masks or following social distancing at public places. Impressed with the suc-

Figure 6.6 | Reports of awareness campaigns and initiatives by the police



cess of this initiative, the city police commissioner wished to increase the number of cameras so that larger swathes of the town could come under surveillance (*The Times of India*, 2020).

A little more than three percent (118 reports) were identified under this category, which is much less than the coverage on other aspects of policing during the pandemic. However, considering the possible future implications of these tools, it becomes important to have a closer look at this category.

Most of the news stories suggest that these tools were a part of the police's surveillance mechanism. They used them mainly to keep an eye on the neighbourhood and catch lockdown violators. Drone cameras were the most common tool for surveillance in most of the states, as at least 42 news stories of police using drone cameras were reported. People were monitored 24 hours a day with the help of cameras and those not wearing masks or maintaining social distancing were penalised.

The growing reliance on advanced technology for policing received high praise from the media but no questions pertaining to their regulation and data protection were raised during this time. On May 5, 2020 the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MCA) and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) allowed the use of drones by government entities for Covid-19 related operations by issuing a conditional exemption under Rule 160 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937. This allowed aerial surveillance, aerial photography and public announcements. It also meant using Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) with Unique Identification Number (UIN) or Drone Acknowledgement Number (DAN), operating between local sunrise and sunset, 200 ft above the ground and within visual line of sight (VLOS). There were geographical restrictions like no usage near the airport, etc.

but the document did not bestow accountability on any authority in cases of misuse. There were no provisions for the handling and management of the data collected by the drones either. Although private bodies have been restricted in their usage of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), similar usage by the police or other governmental authorities pose considerable threats to the right to privacy. In fact, using aerial surveillance is not just invasion of privacy but a direct violation of the judgment in *Justice KS Puttaswamy v. Union of India*.

The usage of UAVs or RPAs continue to exist in a legal vacuum, where law enforcement authorities can obtain permission and gain an unrestricted access to them in the name of maintaining law and order. Additionally, the camera or drone recordings are personal data and should fall within the ambit of the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019. Individuals can also be directly identified using facial recognition and AI technology, and hence, adopting such practices may qualify as collection of sensitive personal data. Absence of laws concerning the use of facial recognition technology is also a serious issue. However, the media

Now, AI to help pin down mask violators in Hyderabad

Mahesh Buddi | TNN | Updated: May 9, 2020, 06:06 IST



A screenshot of the AI system differentiating between those with masks (in red boxes) and those without masks... Read More

HYDERABAD: In what could be a first-of-its-kind experiment, Telangana police are using artificial intelligence (AI) to track those stepping out without wearing face mask, which has been made mandatory by the government. The new system alerts police after analysing live CCTV footage.

"Deep learning technique is being implemented on

News source: (*The Times of India*, 2020)

chose not to raise any of these valid concerns and instead, focused on the operational novelty of the technology, as shown in the examples below.

सेक्टर- 7 की गलियों में ड्रोन से निगरानी शुरू, लॉकडाउन का उल्लंघन कर रहे लोगों को वीडियो फुटेज के आधार पर गिरफ्तार करेगी पुलिस

एक वर्ष पहले

सेक्टर- 7 में व्यक्ति के कोरोना वायरस की चपेट में आने के बाद प्रशासन ने पूरे क्षेत्र की ड्रोन से निगरानी शुरू कर दी है। इससे पहले धर्मपुरा कॉलोनी की निगरानी ड्रोन से कवाई जा चुकी है। प्रशासन लोगों से बार-बार लॉकडाउन का पालन करने की अपील कर रहा है। साथ ही हिदायत भी दी जा रही है। इसके बाद भी कुछ लोग लॉकडाउन के नियमों का पालन नहीं कर रहे। ऐसे में सेक्टर- 7 में इमारत की छतों व गलियों पर ड्रोन से निगरानी रखनी शुरू कर दी है। अब सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग का पालन न करने वालों पर सख्त कार्रवाई की तैयार की जा रही है। पूरे इलाके में ड्रोन कैमरे से पुलिस नजर रखे हुए है। यहां कंटेनमेंट जोन में सील हुई इमारतों की छतों पर इकट्ठा होकर लॉकडाउन के नियमों का उल्लंघन कर रहे लोगों को पुलिस गिरफ्तार करेगी। शनिवार को पुलिस ने ड्रोन उड़ाकर स्थिति का जायजा लिया। शुक्रवार को जिस तरह लोग सेक्टर- 7 में छतों पर एकत्र होने लगे थे। अब ए' से लोगों के खिलाफ सख्त कार्रवाई के लिए पहले सबूतों को एकत्र किया जा रहा है। पुलिस के अनुसार कुछ लोग लॉकडाउन का पालन नहीं कर रहे हैं। ऐसे में बेवजह घरों से बाहर निकलने व इमारत की छतों पर भीड़ जमा करने वालों पर शिकंजा कसने के लिए कई ड्रोन कैमरे से निगरानी रखनी शुरू की है। इन कैमरों की मदद से लॉकडाउन व सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग के आदेशों का अवहेलना करने वालों को चित्रीकरण व वीडियो फुटेज के आधार पर चिह्नित करके दंडित किया जाएगा।

कंटेनमेंट एरिया किया घोषित, पुलिस बल तैनात

झुंझर | सलीहा गांव निवासी एवं दिल्ली में कार्यरत एक जवान के कोरोना पॉजिटिव पाए जाने पर जिला प्रशासन की ओर से गांव को कंटेनमेंट एरिया घोषित किया गया। गांव सलीहा को पूरी तरह से सील कर दिया गया है। डीआईजी अशोक कुमार के दिशा निर्देश अनुसार गांव को सील करने के लिए किए गए सुरक्षा प्रबंधों के तहत गांव सलीहा के चारों तरफ नाकेबंदी करके भारी पुलिस बल तैनात किया है। गांव के चारों तरफ छह विशेष नाके लगाए गए हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त एक राउडर व एक पीसीआर को भी तैनात किया गया है। आसपास के गांव के लोगों को भी गांव सलीहा की तरफ न आने के प्रति सजग किया जा रहा है। जिला प्रशासन की अनुमति के बिना किसी भी व्यक्ति को न तो गांव में आने दिया जाएगा और न ही गांव से बाहर निकलने दिया जाएगा। जिला प्रशासन से उचित अनुमति प्राप्त व अधिकृत वाहनों को ही आने जाने की इजाजत दी जाएगी।

News source: (Dainik Bhaskar, 2020)

Corona Lockdown 2: तस्वीर खींचने वाले पुलिस के ड्रोन से निकलेगी सायरन की आवाज Aligarh news



Publish Date: Sun, 19 Apr 2020 04:06 PM (IST) | Author: Sandeep Saxena

लॉकडाउन का उल्लंघन करने वालों के लिए ऑड, ईवन की व्यवस्था करने के बाद अलीगढ़ पुलिस एक और पहल करने जा रही है।

अलीगढ़ [सुनिता शर्मा] : लॉकडाउन का उल्लंघन करने वालों के लिए ऑड, ईवन की व्यवस्था करने के बाद अलीगढ़ पुलिस एक और पहल करने जा रही है। हवा में उड़ने वाले ड्रोन में पुलिस के सायरन व अन्य आवाजें डाली जा सकाई हैं। दो सो मीटर ऊंचाई से तस्वीरों को आसानी से कैद करने वाला मौजूदा ड्रोन पहले से ही कई मायनों में खास है, लेकिन आवाज के लिए इतना नया हाइटेक इंस्टॉल किया जाएगा।

कोरोना की निगरानी ड्रोन से

News source: (Dainik Jagran, 2020)

Similarly, newspapers reported that the police took help from citizens, especially people from local communities and appointed them as special police officers or *police mitra* in some states. They were assigned policing duties in their respective neighbourhoods. The report below focusses primarily on the benefits of such moves and how *police mitras* had been helping the local police in implementing

lockdown guidelines. It called them brave and went on to appreciate their dedication and effort. However, the report failed to question the legal frameworks behind such appointments and the possible adverse implications of such moves.

जोधपुर: कोरोना से लड़ने जुटे 500 पुलिस मित्र, दिन-रात कर रहे गश्त

जोधपुर एक वर्ष पहले



शहर में कोरोना संक्रमण फैलने से रोकने की मुहिम में अब पुलिस के साथ 500 से अधिक पुलिस मित्र भी जुटे हैं। भीतरी शहर की तो शायद ही ऐसी कोई गली बची है, जहां पुलिस मित्र खुद खतरों के बीच खड़े होकर जनता को घरों से बाहर नहीं निकलने की अपील करते दिखाई दे रहे हैं। पुलिस प्रशासन ने भी इन पुलिस मित्रों को खासतौर से तैयार कराई गई टी-शर्ट के साथ परिचय पत्र भी दिए हैं, ताकि वे हर गली मोहल्ले के बाहर मुश्तद रहकर कोरोना को हराने में भूमिका निभाने के लिए डटे रहें। पुलिस कमिश्नर प्रफुल्ल कुमार ने बताया कि राजस्थान में 'पुलिस मित्र' योजना शुरू कर ऑनलाइन आवेदन मांगे जा रहे थे।

News source: (Dainik Bhaskar, 2020)

Battling Covid-19 with high praise and minimum resources

Police have been the frontline workers in these challenging times and limited resources further exacerbate their woes. The virus took a heavy toll on the police force. As per data released by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) in its special compendium on 'The Indian Police Response on Covid-19 Crisis', till 21 August 2020, 76,768 police personnel tested positive, of which 401 lost their lives (Bureau of Police Research and Development, 2020). However, data shows, media took cognisance of the police's struggle and frequently voiced their difficulties. The proportion of news reports of 'police affected due to Covid-19' was significantly higher compared to some other categories. Stories of police personnel testing positive were frequently reported. In the initial phase, reports also pointed out that police personnel were working under a lot of stress. They were working for long hours and without proper food and rest. In addition, they were anxious about Covid-19 and many of them were forced to live away from their family to avoid infection. All these factors were highlighted in multiple media reports (Suman, 2020).

A total of 670 news stories (17%) were reported under this category. Unlike other categories, no clear week-wise trend is observed here. The number of articles in this category remained high throughout the lockdown, right from the second week of April. The least number of news stories on the police being affected due to Covid-19 were reported in the first week of April (23). However, from week 2 to week 9 i.e., from April 8 to June 2, 54 news stories were reported per week on an average. Similarly, from week 10 to week 13 i.e., a month after the nationwide lockdown, 55 news stories were reported per week on an average. It clearly indicates that post-lockdown the number of reports on police being affected because of the virus increased slightly.

Efforts of the police were acknowledged both by public personalities and common people. Several reports on the police being praised by common people were seen, especially in the initial few weeks. News stories on popular movie stars and politicians thanking police personnel for their duty were prominently seen. The media also made special efforts to appreciate the hard work of the police. The struggles and sacrifices of police personnel were covered through special stories (Shukla, 2020).

Like most of the other categories, the maximum number of news stories was reported in April, especially between the first and second phases of the lockdown. Out of a total of 294 news stories in which police personnel were celebrated for their work during the pandemic, nearly one-third were reported in the second and third weeks i.e., between April 8 and April 21. At many places, the police were welcomed with applause and showered with flower petals (*Dainik Bhaskar*, 2020). News reports show that police personnel were also encouraged with special rewards, including medals for their service by their respective departments. In

addition, families of police personnel who lost their lives to Covid-19 were provided special support by state governments.

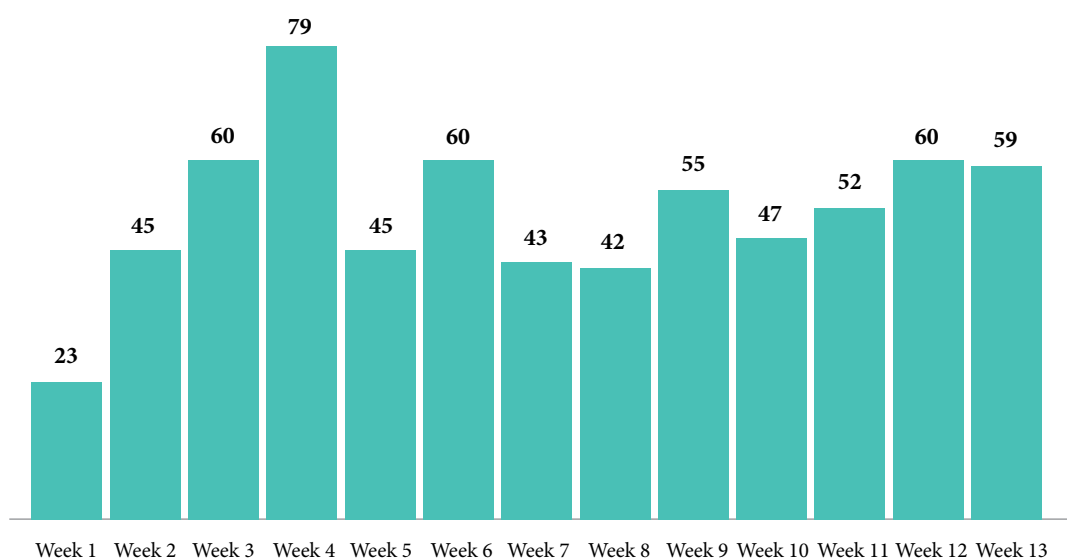
Conclusion

Barring a few exceptions, the media coverage during the lockdown was largely positive and in favour of the police. It highlighted the importance of police in the Covid-19 management during the lockdown. News reports frequently indicated that they were being used as an extension or replacement for other state departments. A significant portion of the coverage was dedicated to numerous roles the police played, their struggles and the praises showered on them for their work. Newspapers ran special stories of police personnel serving during the difficult time and frequently addressed them as 'Covid warriors'.

Strict actions of police and their frequent use of corporal punishment against lockdown violators were widely reported but the coverage was largely aimed at discouraging people from going out during the lockdown.

Unprecedented times demand swift actions from the government. But sometimes, these actions adversely affect sections of the society, often in egregious disregard to constitutional values. In such situations, the role of the media becomes even more decisive. It is expected to act not only as the effective carrier of the government's message but also as the messenger of the anguished masses. It is expected to look at the events even more carefully and critically and raise pertinent questions. Going by the data, it is evident that the media played a significant role in conveying regular updates about the lockdown rules that were ought to be followed by the people and other initiatives started by the police. However, it largely limited itself to the reporting

Figure 6.7 | Reports of police personnel affected due to Covid-19



of bare facts or the official information and rarely looked at their actions or initiatives critically and hardly raised questions on behalf of the citizens.

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What the Migrants and Relief Workers Say: *Summary of a Separate, Rapid Survey*

A woman wearing a protective face mask walks past a graffiti after authorities eased lockdown restrictions in Mumbai, India, June 12, 2020.
©REUTERS/Hemanshi Kamani.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The abrupt lockdown was not viewed favourably by the most severely affected people or those providing relief to them. Four out of five migrant workers and nearly an equal proportion of the aid workers believe that if people were informed of the lockdown earlier, they would have faced lesser difficulties.
- Aiding and distributing food, rations or essential provisions were the biggest form of support provided by the police in the times of crisis, according to both migrant and aid workers. Nearly sixty percent aid workers feel that police was highly or somewhat helpful in distributing food/ration.
- More than half the aid workers interviewed strongly believed that the police lacked training to deal with the lockdown. Further, about three out of five (57%) aid workers felt that the police was not at all equipped to deal with the situation.
- Nearly half of the migrant workers contacted faced assault by the police during the lockdown. Further, one in 10 migrant workers faced assault by the police while going back to their home states/villages. Like the migrant workers, the aid workers also report assault as the most common form of cruelty by the police during the lockdown. Seventy percent say police used force against common people many times or sometimes.
- Two out of five migrant workers (38%) believed that the strictness with which the police was enforcing the rules during the lockdown was inappropriate and harsh, while 47 percent believed that strictness was required for the safety and police was doing its job. A significant proportion of aid workers (40%) were also strongly of the opinion that the unnecessarily strict rules of the lockdown were a big hindrance in the proper functioning of the police during this period.
- More than one-third of the aid workers believe that police behaved very badly with the homeless people, slum dwellers and migrant workers during the lockdown. One out of two aid workers also say that the police discriminated against Muslims during the lockdown, with 50 percent reporting high or medium levels of discrimination.
- Overall, three out of five migrant workers (59%) and aid workers (61%) were satisfied with the work of the police during the lockdown. At the same time, however, both groups were also of the opinion that there was excessive use of force by the police during the lockdown. Nearly three out of five migrant workers (57%) and four out of five aid workers (80%) report frequent use of force by the police against the common people during the lockdown.

What the Migrants and Relief Workers Say: *Summary of a Separate, Rapid Survey*

In the wake of the national lockdown in March 2020, most economic activities in the country came to a grinding halt. One of the biggest casualties of this unprecedented situation were the casual labourers and daily wagers, who rely heavily on the day-to-day income to sustain their lives. Many of them are also migrant workers, who have relocated from their villages and home states for the sake of their livelihoods. During the first wave of the pandemic, income insecurity, the uncertainty of the virus and the sheer fact that during this period of instability many were away from their homes and families, caused a huge migrant exodus in the country soon after the imposition of the lockdown.

In these circumstances, a study was undertaken by Common Cause to report the experiences of those who were arguably the worst hit, particularly regarding their experiences with the police. A rapid survey was conducted with both migrant workers and the aid workers, who were providing relief to the people on the ground, during the first wave of the pandemic and the lockdown in 2020. In particular, the role of the police in managing the situation and the experiences of those who came in contact with the police during this period have been examined. Extracts of an unpublished study, titled ‘Police Response to the Pandemic: A Rapid Survey of Migrant and Aid Workers’ have been summarised in this chapter.

According to the University of Oxford Government Response Stringency Index (Hale, 2021), in the initial phases of the pandemic, India had one of the strictest lockdown rules in the world. The task of enforcing such severe restrictions fell largely on the police, and they, for better or worse, virtually became the only visible face of the state during the lockdown. Along with the regular policing activities, they were seen performing activities that traditionally do not fall within their purview. These included distributing food or ration, arranging shelters, assisting migrant workers in their journeys, providing health services to the needy, among others. The objective of this study

is to understand how well and to what extent the police performed these tasks. Along with examining the overall manner of policing during the lockdown, and their dealings with the public and vice versa, the study also looks at the use of violence, discrimination if any, and the problem faced by the police personnel themselves.

A combination of research methods such as telephonic and online surveys, interviews, focused group discussion were used for the study. Two groups were surveyed for this study. Firstly, migrant workers who either had some kind of contact with the police during the lockdown or were travelling back to their home state or villages during the lockdown were interviewed about their experiences with the police. The second group surveyed was that of aid workers who were providing relief to the needy during the lockdown and were working on the field, thus making them more likely to have some contact with the police during the lockdown. Since it was a dipstick, rapid study, the sample size for the survey was around 100 respondents of each cohort located in a limited area confined to parts of Delhi-NCR, Gujarat and Rajasthan (For more details on methodology for this study, see Appendix 1). Considering the physical constraints of the lockdown, the surveys were conducted both telephonically as well as online.

At a time when the public mobility was severely restricted and a majority of population was in their homes, these two groups were on the roads and had real-time interaction or contact with the police. Two separate questionnaires were designed for the study. The survey questionnaires had both closed-ended quantitative questions as well as open-ended ones for more qualitative insights into people’s experiences.

Profile of migrant workers: Class and employment status

Hundred migrant workers were surveyed from the states of Delhi, Rajasthan and Gujarat. The workers came from either another part of the same state, or a different state

Note: The study was conducted during the months of October and November in 2020, and therefore, it is confined to the first wave of the Covid-19 and the first phase of the consequential lockdown(s) that were imposed in 2020.

altogether, and had migrated to the source location for employment. Due to the inability to get contact details of sufficient numbers of migrant workers who were residing in either Rajasthan or Gujarat, the survey sample was largely skewed towards Delhi. Sixty eight percent responses were from Delhi, 18 percent from Rajasthan and 14 percent from Gujarat. Therefore, state-specific analysis of this data has not been done because of this uneven sample distribution.

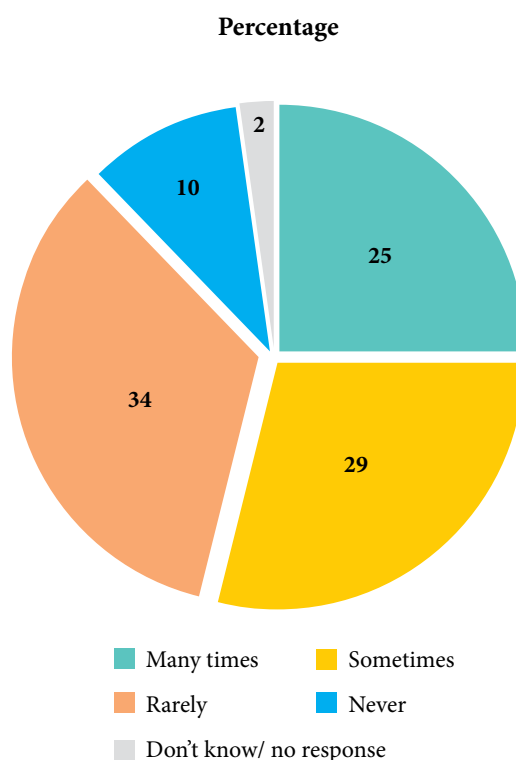
The largest section of respondents was factory workers (34%), followed by construction workers (20%). Back in their villages/home states, most of the respondents were not engaged in any form of employment (88%), but those who were, were reportedly doing farming (6%), daily wage work, etc.

The average monthly salary of the migrant workers surveyed was ₹ 11,228, with four percent respondents claiming to have no income at the time of the survey and five percent declining to respond to the question. Three out of four respondents earned a monthly salary ranging between ₹ 5,000 and ₹ 15,000 (75%). Four percent had a monthly income of less than ₹ 5,000 and six percent had a monthly income more than ₹ 20,000.

A large proportion of those interviewed were young males (with three-fourths of the respondents being in the age bracket of 21 to 40 years). Most of them were originally from Bihar (one out of two) and Uttar Pradesh (one out of four), and belonged either to a vulnerable caste or tribe category or a minority religion (64%).

Availability of ration or cooked food

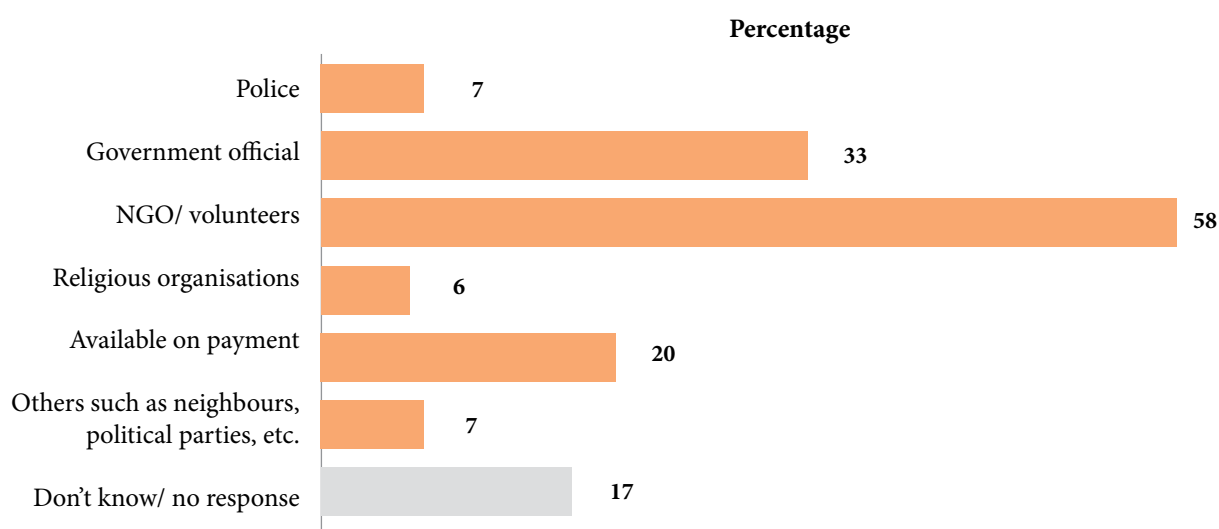
Figure 7.1 | More than two out of five migrant workers rarely or never got ration during the lockdown



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "During the lockdown, did you get ration or cooked food – many times, sometimes, rarely or never?"

Figure 7.2 | Seven percent migrant workers received ration or food from the police



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: Who provided you this service – a. Police b. Government official; c. NGO or volunteer; d. Religious organisation; e. Had to purchase; f. Any other (please specify)

Migrant workers' perceptions about the lockdown and services received

In this section, we look at the availability of basic services such as ration or cooked food to the migrant workers, the reasons for them to travel back to their home states or villages and the problems faced by them during the travel.

On being asked whether they got ration or cooked food during the lockdown, one out of three respondents said rarely, and 10 percent said they never received it. However, a significant proportion of the respondents (one out of four) also said that they had received ration/cooked food many times and 29 percent said that they had received it sometimes during the lockdown (Figure 7.1).

Accounts of migrant workers travelling back to their home states/villages

According to a statement made by the Ministry of Home Affairs in late May 2020, there are around 40 million migrant labourers across the country, of which, till then, 7.5 million had returned in trains and buses after the national lockdown (*The Times of India*, 2020). Unofficial estimates point to a much larger number making their way back home by any means possible – trucks, private buses, bikes, cycle or foot (Chishti, 2020).

Table 7.1 | Availability of essential services to migrant workers while travelling back to their villages/home states

Agency providing the facility	Type of facility			
	Food (%)	Shelter/ Resting place (%)	Toilet/ bathing facilities (%)	Health services (%)
Police	4	0	0	2
Government official/authority	8	0	0	21
Volunteers/NGOs	32	2	0	8
Religious organisation	4	0	0	0
On payment of money	60	0	15	0
Did not get the service	9	47	43	26
Did not need the service	8	45	21	55
Others	4	0	25	0

Note: Rest of the respondents did not answer. All figures are rounded off. Respondents had the option of selecting multiple answers. Thus, the total figure may be more than 100%. N=53.

Question asked: "Who provided you with the following facilities while you were travelling back to your home state/village (police; government official; NGO/volunteer; religious organisation; received on payment of money; did not get the service; did not need the service; others) – a. food; b. shelter/resting place; c. toilet/bathing facilities; d. health services?"

In this survey, one out of two respondents (52%) went back to their villages while two percent said that they tried to go back but could not. A large number of respondents (65%) paid and travelled in private buses, trucks, tempos, cars or other private vehicles, while 22 percent used multiple modes of transport – on foot, bus, cycle, auto, etc. A notable 12 percent of the respondents went back on foot. One out of five respondents (22%) said that they had gone back by train or a government bus.

According to the respondents, one of the biggest reasons for the migrant workers to travel back to their home states was the loss of income. Almost nine out of 10 respondents said that their loss of job was 'very much' the reason for them to go back. A much smaller, though significant proportion of respondents (25%) said that the fear of coronavirus was very much the reason for them to go back, while 28 percent of the respondents said that concern or worry for their family was a strong reason for them to return. It is apparent, then, that economic reason is the strongest deciding factor for the respondents to go back to their villages. Only 11 percent of the respondents say that they continued to get money but not going for work was 'very much' the reason for them to go back. The average cost incurred during travel per person was ₹ 2,556 and ₹ 18,738 for a whole group.

A large number of respondents (60%) said that they had to either buy food or was given food by volunteers/NGOs (32%) during their journey. Very few respondents, (11%) said that they got it from the police or a government authority/official (Table 7.1). Other facilities, such as a resting place and toilet or bathing facilities were mostly unavailable, particularly from the police or government authorities. While nearly half the respondents said they did not need a resting place during the journey, the remaining said that they did not get the facility at all from anyone. Similarly, 43 percent of the respondents said that they did not get toilet facilities on the way. Those who did get, availed it at hotels, restaurants or petrol pumps on the highway or on payment of money.

The only facility the government authorities appear to have provided the migrant workers during the journey were health services or check-ups. About 23 percent of the respondents said that either the police or a government official provided this facility. Eighty five percent of the respondents said that thermal tests were done on the way, and 77 percent said that they were checked for cough and cold.

Despite the hardships that many faced during the journey and the lack of basic facilities such as food, toilet, etc. for many, a majority of the respondents, 70 percent, said that

during the lockdown period, they faced most difficulty before their journey while they were in Delhi/Rajasthan/Gujarat. Only 11 percent said that they faced most difficulty during the journey. Fifteen percent said that for them the most difficult period was after they reached their village/home state.

The larger picture that emerges from these findings is that even though the respondent migrant workers clearly belonged to the lower socio-economic strata of the society, very little assistance was offered to them, both in the states and cities of their employment as well as at the time of their journey back to their home state/village.

Aid workers’ perceptions about the lockdown and difficulties faced by them during relief work

Problems faced by aid workers while providing relief during lockdown

Due to the strict lockdown guidelines, the aid workers reportedly faced different kinds of problems during the relief work. The respondents were asked about particular problems they faced. They were asked to rate each problem on a scale of one to five, with one signifying they did not face the particular problem at all and five signifying that they faced it a lot. For easier assessment of the level of the problems faced by them, an index was created by taking the mean value of the responses. Higher index value indicates that the respondents faced this problem a lot.

As is evident from Figure 7.3, the biggest problem the aid workers faced in dealing with the police or government authorities was not getting permissions to go out despite reiterating that they wanted to provide relief work. The next big problem was harassment at the hands of the police despite having the requisite permissions. The staff or volunteers refused to work during the lockdown because of the fear of the police. Nearly 22 percent respondents

Figure 7.3 | Index of problems faced by aid workers

2.8 Despite telling the government authorities that you wanted to provide relief work, not getting permission to go out	2.5 Despite having requisite permissions, being harassed by the police
2.0 Interference by the police or other government authorities in your work	2.4 Your staff or volunteers refused to work because of fear of the police

Note: Index has been created using the weighted average of the responses in each category.

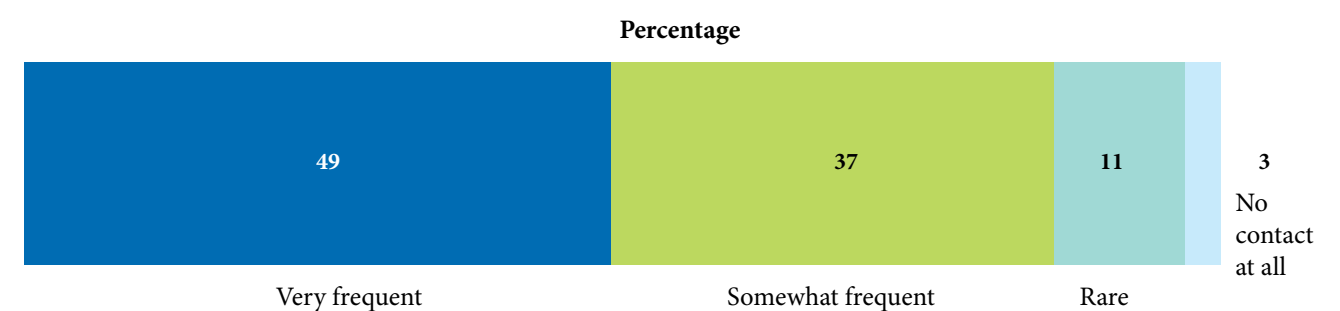
Question asked: “Did you or your colleagues face the following difficulties while providing relief work during the lockdown?” (Rate the problem on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means that you did not face this problem at all and 5 means that you faced this problem a lot): a. Not getting permission to go out despite telling the government authorities that you wanted to provide relief work; b. Being harassed by the police despite having requisite permissions; c. Interference by the police or other government authorities in your work; d. Your staff or volunteers refused to work because of fear of police”

said that they faced the latter problem a lot, and gave it a score of five. Despite showing a pass, an aid worker was threatened with arrest by the police. Some also mentioned that the process of getting permissions or passes was difficult. There was confusion amongst both the public as well as the police, about the kind of permissions required and the mode of getting them. Some aid workers reported incidents of harassment at the hands of the police, despite having the permissions.

Contact with the police

Nearly all aid workers reported having some kind of contact with the police during the lockdown, with varying levels of frequency of contact. Just about three percent of the aid workers interviewed said they had no contact with the police at all while providing relief work during the lockdown.

Figure 7.4 | One out of two aid workers had very frequent contact with the police during the lockdown



Note: Rest of the respondents did not respond. All figures are rounded off.
 Question asked: “In your work during the lockdown period, how frequently did you interact with the police – very frequently; somewhat frequently; rarely; never?”

One out of two respondents said they had very frequent contact and 37 percent reported having a somewhat frequent interaction. Eleven percent, on the other hand, said they hardly had any contact, and about three percent said they had no contact at all (*Figure 7.4*).

All the respondents agreed that the police largely adhering to the health and safety protocols by wearing masks or maintaining social distancing. However, a few of the respondents mentioned that while police maintained distance from the public and asked the public to do the same, these rules did not apply to the police personnel interacting with their own staff. A few aid workers noted the lack or shortage of safety equipment with the police personnel. Often NGOs were providing them with masks, gloves, sanitisers, etc.

Role of the police during the lockdown

In this section, we look at the experiences and perceptions of both the migrant workers as well as the aid workers vis-à-vis the police and the role played by them during the lockdown in 2020. Both quantitative as well as qualitative responses have been analysed and reported to understand their experiences with the police, the general helpfulness of the police during such trying times, the problems faced by the police personnel themselves, police use of violence or excessive force and the overall satisfaction with the work of the police during the lockdown in the first wave of the pandemic.

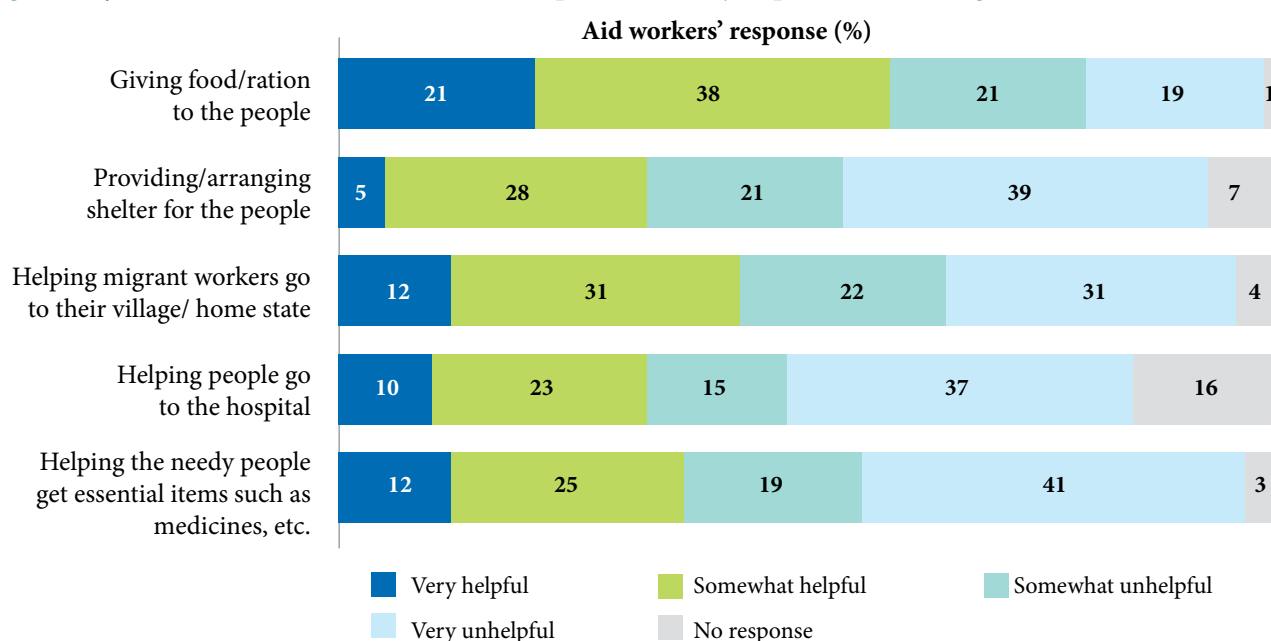
Services provided by the police

Qualitative insights from some of the interviews with migrant workers point to the police being generally helpful – from distributing food/water, ration, cash, masks, etc. to providing them tickets and arranging/finding conveyance to help them reach home free of cost. Some police personnel even helped the poor out of their own pocket and gave them their personal phone numbers to contact for help. For instance, a migrant worker from the Delhi-NCR region said, two policemen bought ration with their own money and distributed it in his locality. According to another aid worker, some of the police stations near his area of work kept a stock of ration and delivered it on receiving SOS calls.

HELPING HAND

Daivya (name changed), an aid worker from Surat, Gujarat relates how the police sometimes tweaked the rules to help people during the lockdown. In one such incident, police helped migrant workers bypass the rules to help them go back to their home states. A truck ferrying 30-40 migrant workers was stopped by the police and they were brought to a shelter home. However, there was no space to accommodate them in the home, so the police told the truck driver to take them to a point where there was a camera to place on police record that they were off boarded. The driver was asked to pick them up from a little ahead, away from the camera, so that they could continue their journey.

Figure 7.5 | One out of five aid workers felt that the police were very helpful in distributing food/ration



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "How helpful was the police in the following – very helpful, somewhat helpful, somewhat unhelpful, very unhelpful: a. Giving food/ration to the people; b. Providing/arranging shelter for the people; c. Helping migrant workers go to their village/home state; d. Helping people go to the hospital; e. Helping the needy people get essential items such as medicines, etc."

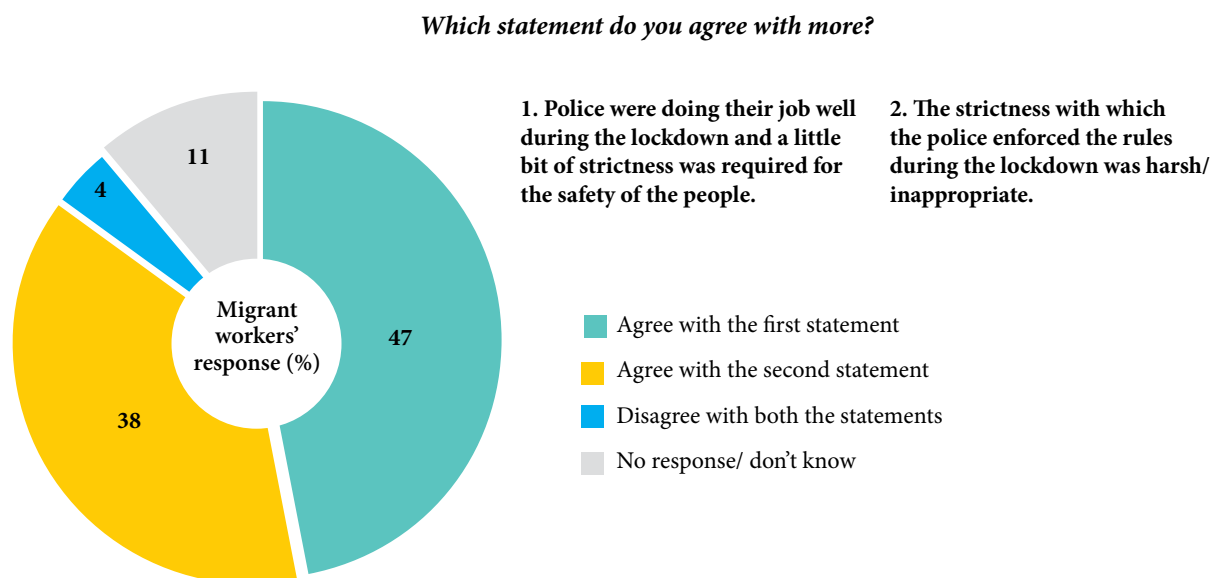
According to both the migrant workers as well as the aid workers, police's biggest support was in aiding the distribution and provision of food or ration.

Further, the migrant workers were also largely (47%) of the opinion that the police was doing its job well and the level of strictness imposed by the police during the lockdown was required for the safety of the people. However, a sig-

nificant proportion of the migrant workers (38%) also felt that the police was unduly harsh and the strictness with which they imposed the rules of the lockdown was inappropriate (Figure 7.6).

The pandemic and the consequent lockdown were as unprecedented for the police, as they were for the general public. For many it increased vulnerability, economic and

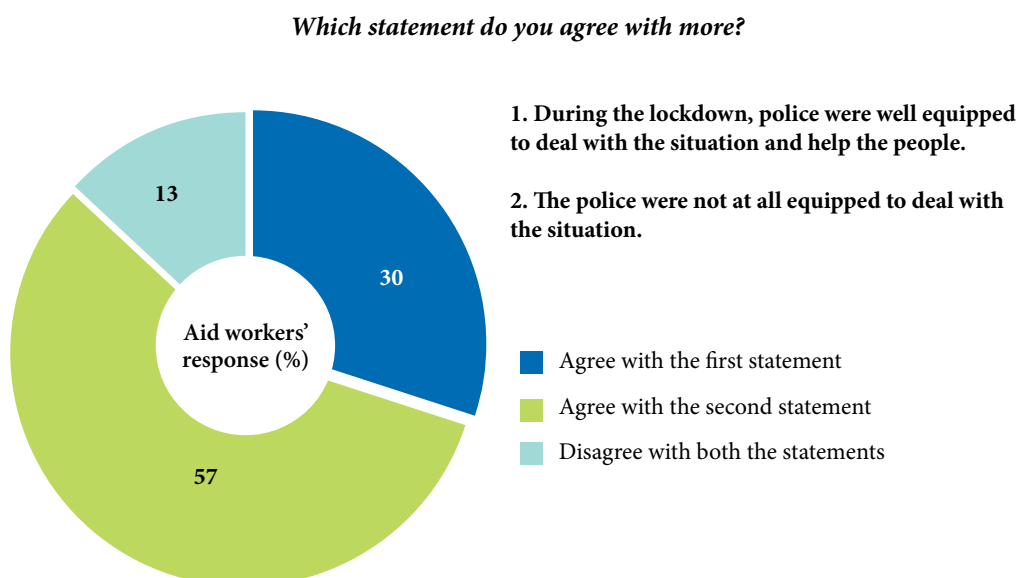
Figure 7.6 | One out of two migrant workers believe that police were doing their job well during the lockdown



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "Now I will read out two statements. Please tell me which statement you agree with more: 1. Police were doing their job well during the lockdown and a little bit of strictness was required for the safety of the people. 2. The strictness with which the police enforced the rules during the lockdown was harsh/inappropriate: a. Agree with the first statement; b. Agree with the second statement; c. Disagree with both the statements; d. No response/ don't know."

Figure 7.7 | More than one out of two aid workers feel that the police were not at all equipped to deal with the situation



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "Now I will read out two statements. Please tell me which statement do you agree with more: 1. During the lockdown, police was well equipped to deal with the situation and help the people. 2. The police was not at all equipped to deal with the situation.": a. Agree with the first statement; b. Agree with the second statement; c. Disagree with both the statements."

social instability. Police personnel were also deeply impacted by an increased toll in terms of harsher, longer working conditions and sudden deviations from the usual scope of their work.

This report does not contain a survey of the police personnel to better capture the difficulties faced by them, but some of the observations by the respondents on the issue have been analysed here. A majority of the aid workers interviewed said that the police did not have the adequate capacity to deal with the situation brought about due to the pandemic. They also felt that the police were more involved in non-policing work during the lockdown and were shouldering the responsibility of enforcing the lockdown without much assistance from other government agencies. When asked if they agreed or disagreed that “during the lockdown the police were mostly performing non-policing activities”, more than four out of five aid workers agreed, with about 46 percent strongly agreeing and 35 percent somewhat agreeing.

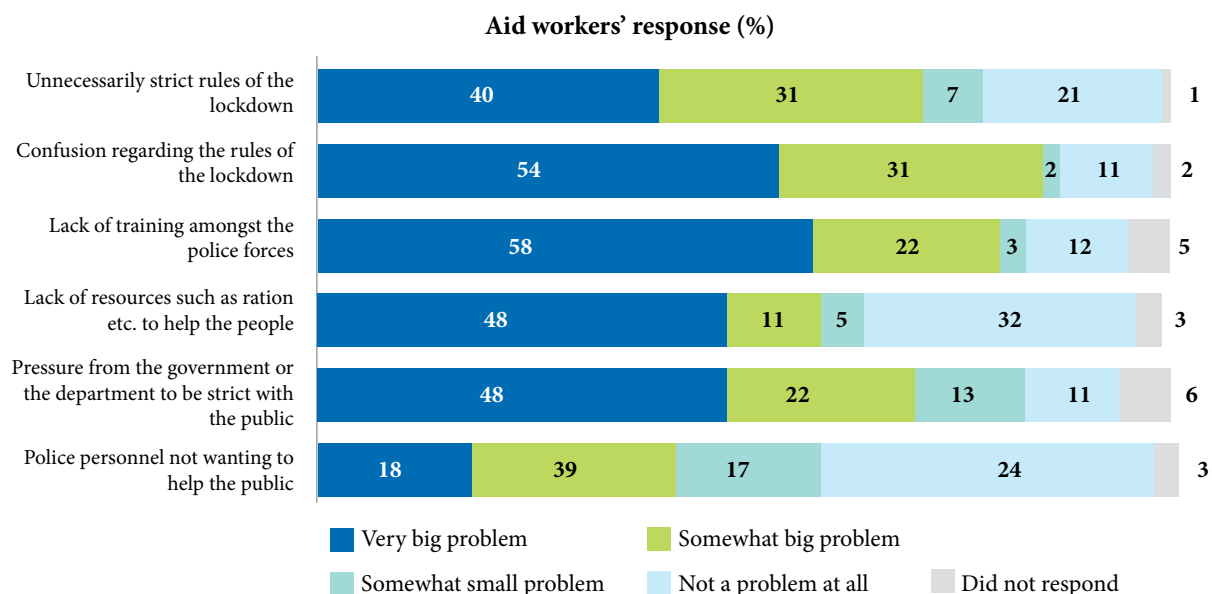
Further, three out of four aid workers were of the strong opinion that the police should not have been given the entire responsibility of enforcing the lockdown. Other government agencies should also have had some responsibility.

Moreover, the aid workers were of the opinion that the unnecessarily strict rules of the lockdown were also a rea-

son for the police personnel not being able to do their jobs properly. Forty percent said this was a very big problem and another 31 percent said this was a somewhat big problem. Similarly, a large majority of the aid workers also felt that there was a lot of confusion regarding the rules of the lockdown. This, according to them, was a hindrance in the police being able to work properly. Fifty-four percent aid workers said this was a very big problem and 31 percent said this was a somewhat big problem. Lack of training (58% felt this was a very big problem), lack of resources such as ration, etc. (48% felt this was a very big problem) and pressure from the government or the departments to be strict with the public (48% felt this was a very big problem) were the other major problems that the aid workers felt the police faced. In contrast, a much smaller proportion of aid workers felt that the police was unwilling to help the public and this was a reason for them not being able to work properly during the lockdown.

The need for a lockdown in view of the health emergency is indisputable. What has been criticised in the Indian context was the sudden lockdown announcement without proper arrangements or giving time for the public to take necessary measures. India had one of the strictest lockdowns globally in the first phase, which was announced mere hours before its imposition. Four out of five aid workers completely agreed that “if people were informed of the lockdown earlier, they would have faced lesser difficulties”.

Figure 7.8 | More than one out of two aid workers strongly believe that the police lacked training to deal with the lockdown and there was confusion regarding rules to be followed



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: “There could be several reasons for the police to not be able to perform their duties properly during the lockdown. Now I will read out some such reasons which could have been a problem for the police personnel. Please tell me how much of a hindrance/problem the following were for the police – very big problem, somewhat big problem, somewhat small problem, not a problem at all: a. Unnecessarily strict rules of the lockdown; b. Confusion regarding the rules of the lockdown; c. Lack of training amongst the police forces; d. Lack of resources such as ration etc. to help the people; e. Pressure from the government or the department to be strict with the public; f. Police personnel not wanting to help the public.”

The migrant workers interviewed in this survey also largely reflect dissatisfaction at the manner in which the lockdown was enforced. Nearly four out of five migrant workers were also of the opinion that if people had been informed about the lockdown beforehand, they would have faced lesser difficulties.

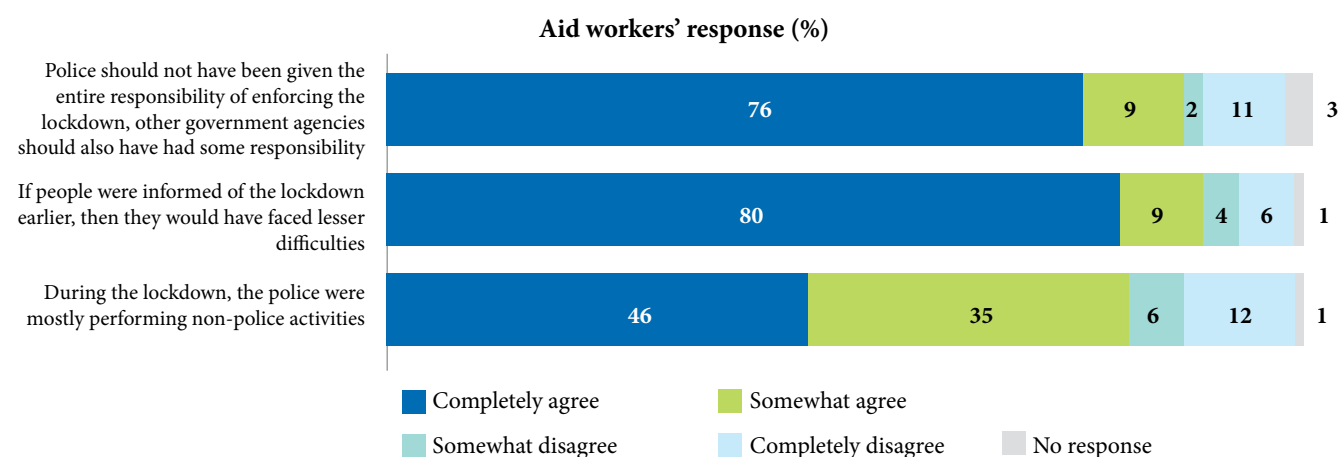
Arrest, violence or use of force by the police

Instances of excessive police force and violence were also not entirely uncommon during the lockdown period. Media reports of deaths due to police violence, both in and

out of custody, simply due to small infringements of lockdown rules were regular. The custodial death of Jeyaraj and Bennicks, father and son (Shekhar, 2020), because of opening their shop in violation of lockdown rules sparked nation-wide outrage.

Another custodial death during the lockdown that repeatedly came up in the course of the migrant and aid workers' surveys in Gujarat was the death of Satya Swain, a migrant worker from Odisha who was working in Surat, Gujarat. He was a member of the Pravasi Shramik Suraksha Manch,

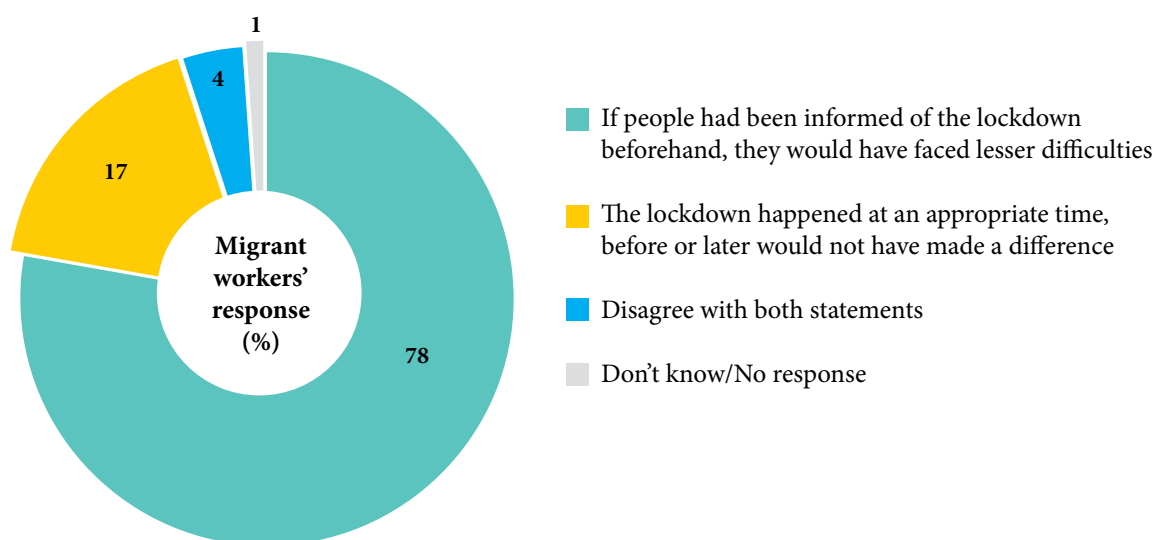
Figure 7.9 | Four out of five aid workers believe that if people were informed of the lockdown earlier, they would have faced lesser difficulties



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "Do you agree or disagree with the following statements (probe whether fully agree/disagree or somewhat): a. Police should not have been given the entire responsibility of enforcing the lockdown, other government agencies should also have had some responsibility; b. If people were informed of the lockdown earlier, then they would have faced fewer difficulties; c. During the lockdown, the police were mostly performing non-police activities."

Figure 7.10 | Four out of five migrant workers believe that if people had been informed of the lockdown earlier, they would have faced lesser difficulties



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? (probe whether fully agree/disagree or somewhat): If people were informed of the lockdown earlier, then they would have faced fewer difficulties".

a loom and textile workers' collective in Surat. On the day of his death, he was present near Anjani Industry, where people were filling forms for Shramik train tickets. Allegedly, the train tickets were being sold at triple the actual rate. After a while, those who couldn't get a ticket started protesting. In response, the police started a lathi charge. Satya Swain was not part of the protest, but because he was present nearby, the police followed and beat him up brutally, after which he died. Later, his family was given a compensation of ₹ Six lakh. This incident was also covered by the media (*Business Today*, 2020).

The migrant workers were asked if they or someone they knew were either arrested, assaulted, levied small punishments such as fines, sit-ups etc., or had to pay a bribe to the police during the lockdown. A majority of the migrant workers said they did not face any of these problems at all, but some did report assault and small punishments such as fines, etc. by the police. In qualitative responses, a number of migrant workers observed that police were beating, punishing/humiliating anyone (using threats, bad language/abuses, etc.) who stepped out of their houses, even if it was for essentials, like groceries, medicines, procuring water from water tankers, food, etc. Although some respondents felt it was necessary at times, especially where people started forming crowds, etc., they also felt that some policemen were too violent. Nearly one out of five migrant workers said they or people they knew faced assault by the police many times, while another 27 percent reported facing it sometimes. A smaller proportion of migrant workers re-

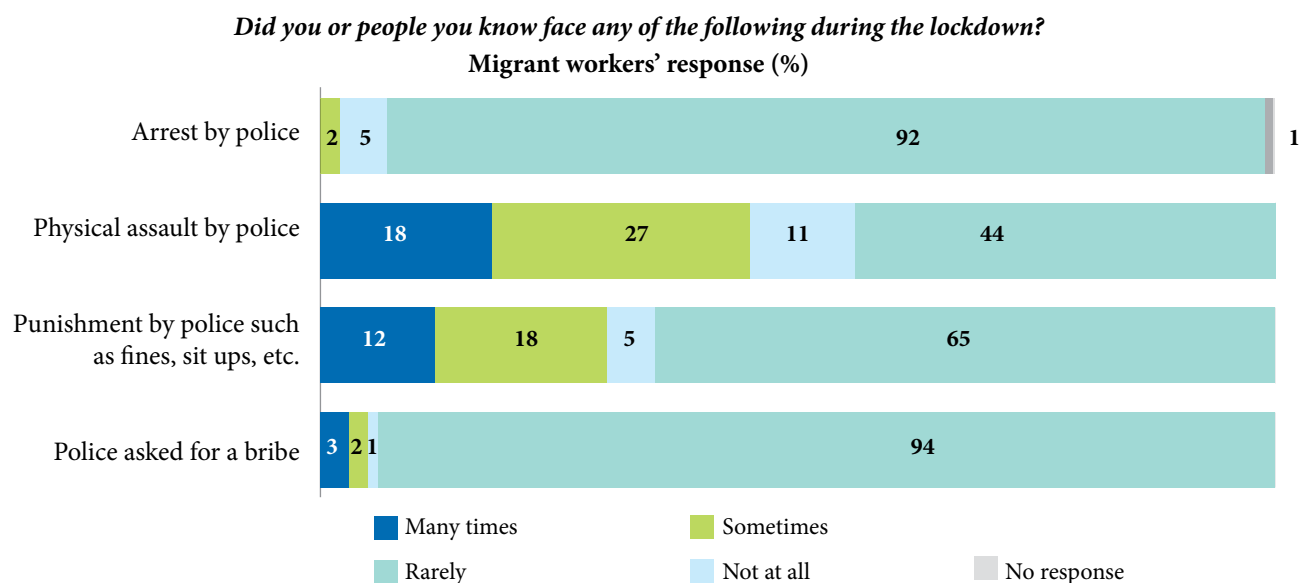
ported facing punishments such as fines or sit-ups, with 12 percent saying that this happened many times and another 18 percent saying that it happened sometimes.

The proportion of migrant workers who reported the use of any kind of force or excess by the police during the course of their journey back to their villages or home states was very small. Only nine percent reported assault, two percent

POLICE HIGH-HANDEDNESS

Mahesh (name changed) is a 24-year-old migrant worker from Ganjam Odisha who was working in Surat, Gujarat as an industry worker, earning a salary of Rs 16,000 before the lockdown. He and his brother left for their village from Surat on 26 May 2020 by train through an agent. He and his brother had to take a bus to the station. The bus stop was crowded and they were afraid of missing the train. When they attempted to board the bus, the police started beating them. The police was hitting everyone indiscriminately. In the confusion, when Mahesh turned to look for his brother he found him lying on the ground. He was rushed to the hospital where they pronounced him dead on arrival. Despite Mahesh and his family's insistence for a post mortem, the police refused. Mahesh was forced to cremate his brother in Surat. Since he had no money to return to his village, some acquaintances booked a ticket for him and he managed to return home.

Figure 7.11 | Nearly one out of two migrant workers frequently faced assault by the police during the lockdown ('sometimes' and 'many times' combined)

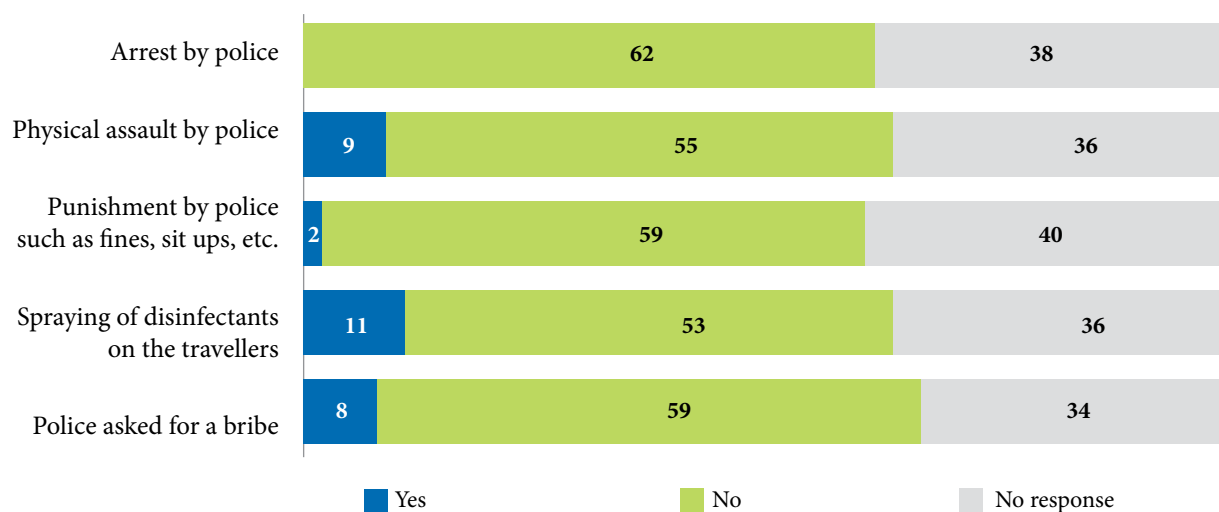


Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "You could have had several kinds of experiences with the police personnel you encountered during the lockdown. Did you, your family members or people you know face the following things with the police during the lockdown—many times, sometimes, rarely, not at all: a. Arrest by police; b. Physical assault by police; c. Punishment by police such as a fine, sit ups, etc.; d. Police asked for a bribe."

Figure 7.12 | One in 10 migrant workers faced assault by the police while going back to their home states/villages

Did you or your fellow travellers face any of the following by the police during your journey back to your village/home state: Migrant workers' response (%)

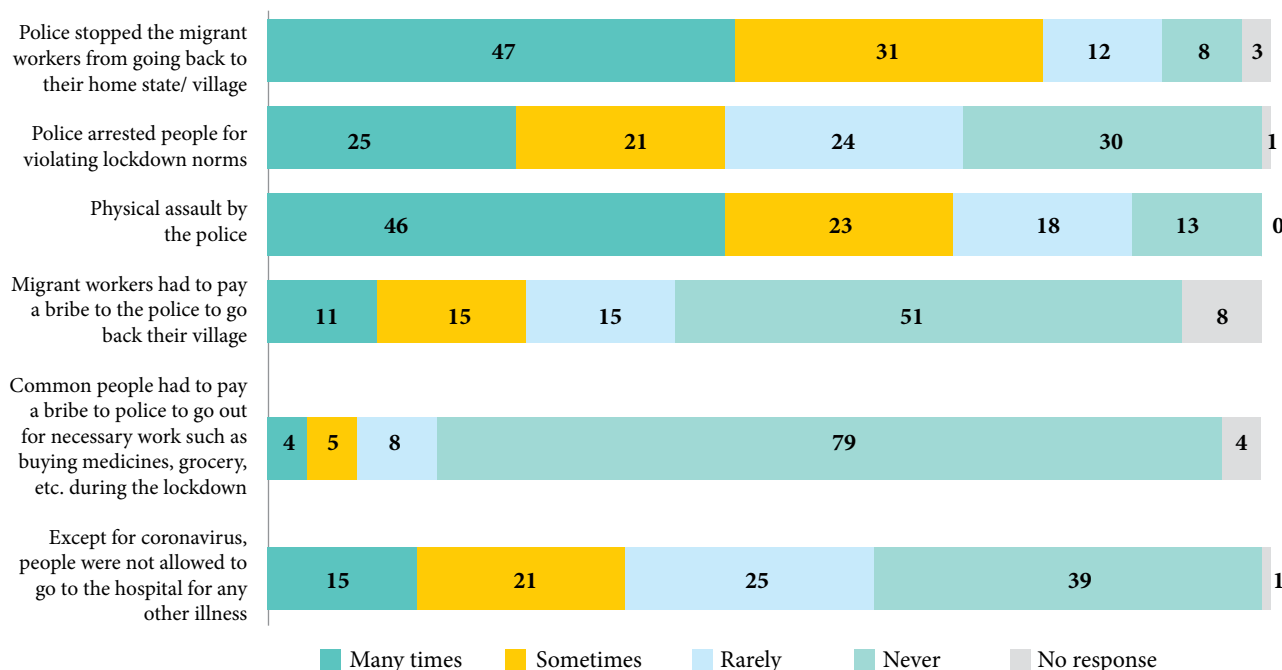


Note: All figures are rounded off. N=53.

Question asked: "Reportedly, migrant workers faced a lot of problems on the way back to their villages or home states. Did you or your fellow travellers face any of the following by the police on your way back to your village or home state: a. Arrest by the police; b. Physical assault by the police; c. Punishment by police, such as fines, sit ups, etc.; d. Spraying of disinfectants on the travellers; e. Police asked for a bribe."

Figure 7.13 | Nearly one out of two aid workers very frequently witnessed the police stopping the migrants from going back to their home states and assault by the police during the lockdown

Aid workers' response (%)



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "During the lockdown, how often did the following incidents come to your notice—many times, sometimes, rarely or never?": a. Police stopped the migrant workers from going back to their home state/ village; b. Police arrested people for violating lockdown norms; c. Physical assault by the police; d. Migrant workers had to pay a bribe to the police to go back their village; e. Common people had to pay a bribe to police to go out for necessary work such as buying medicines, grocery, etc. during the lockdown; f. Except for coronavirus, people were not allowed to go to the hospital for any other illness.

reported small punishment, 11 percent said they or their fellow travellers were sprayed with disinfectants and eight percent reported having to pay a bribe to the police during the journey. Compared to the overall response of migrant workers, those who travelled back during the lockdown are more likely to report the police asking for a bribe. One migrant worker told the interviewer that some officials were asking for bribe to issue Covid negative certificates. Numerous workers felt that the travel rates were unusually high because the police took a share from the truck drivers, travel agents, etc.

Compared to the migrant workers, the aid workers surveyed in the study were much more likely to report a high frequency of police excesses. One of the reasons was that while the responses of migrant workers were experience-based, the aid workers presumably came in contact with a much larger group of people. Therefore, their observations were more general in nature.

Nearly one out of two aid workers said that the police stopped the migrant workers from going back to their home states or villages many times (47%) and another 31 percent said that they were stopped sometimes. Like the migrant workers, the aid workers also reported assault as the most common form of excess by the police during the lockdown. Forty-seven percent said this happened many

times and 23 percent said it happened sometimes. The overall proportion of aid workers reporting police demanding bribe during the lockdown is low.

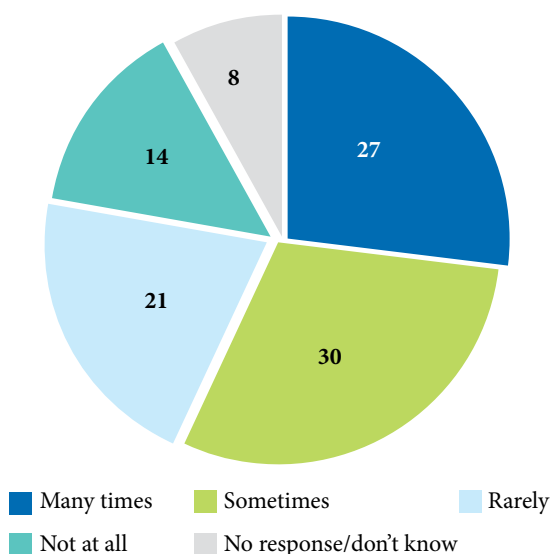
In the survey, the migrant and aid workers were both asked about the extent of force used by the police in general during the lockdown. While 57 percent of the migrant workers reported frequent use of force by the police during the lockdown (many times and sometimes combined), a much larger share of aid workers, four out of five, reported frequent use of force by the police (many times and sometimes combined). While 27 percent migrant workers said the police resorted to the use of force many times during the lockdown, 51 percent of the aid workers reported the same happening many times. Even though there are significant differences in the percentages of migrant workers and aid workers reporting frequent use of force by the police, the percentage of migrant workers saying that the police never used force during the lockdown is high, at 14 percent, as compared to the eight percent said by the aid workers. In a sense, this could be attributed to police normalising the use of force and justifying such actions “for the larger good and safety of the people”.

A disturbing trend emerging from the interviews with both the surveyed groups was that of vigilante policing, explicitly or implicitly supported by the police, by local

Figure 7.14 | One out of four migrant workers feel that the police used force against common people very frequently during the lockdown

Use of force by the police during the lockdown

Migrant workers' response (%)



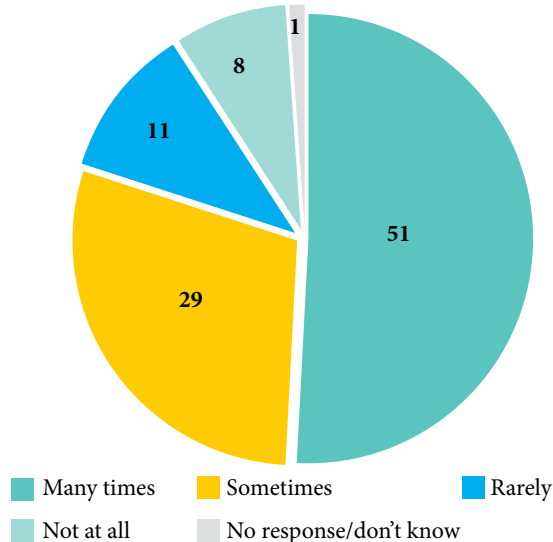
Note: All figures are rounded off. N=100.

Question asked: “In your experience, during the lockdown, how frequently did the police use force against the common people—many times, sometimes, rarely or not at all?”

Figure 7.15 | One out of two aid workers feel that the police used force against common people very frequently during the lockdown

Use of force by the police during the lockdown

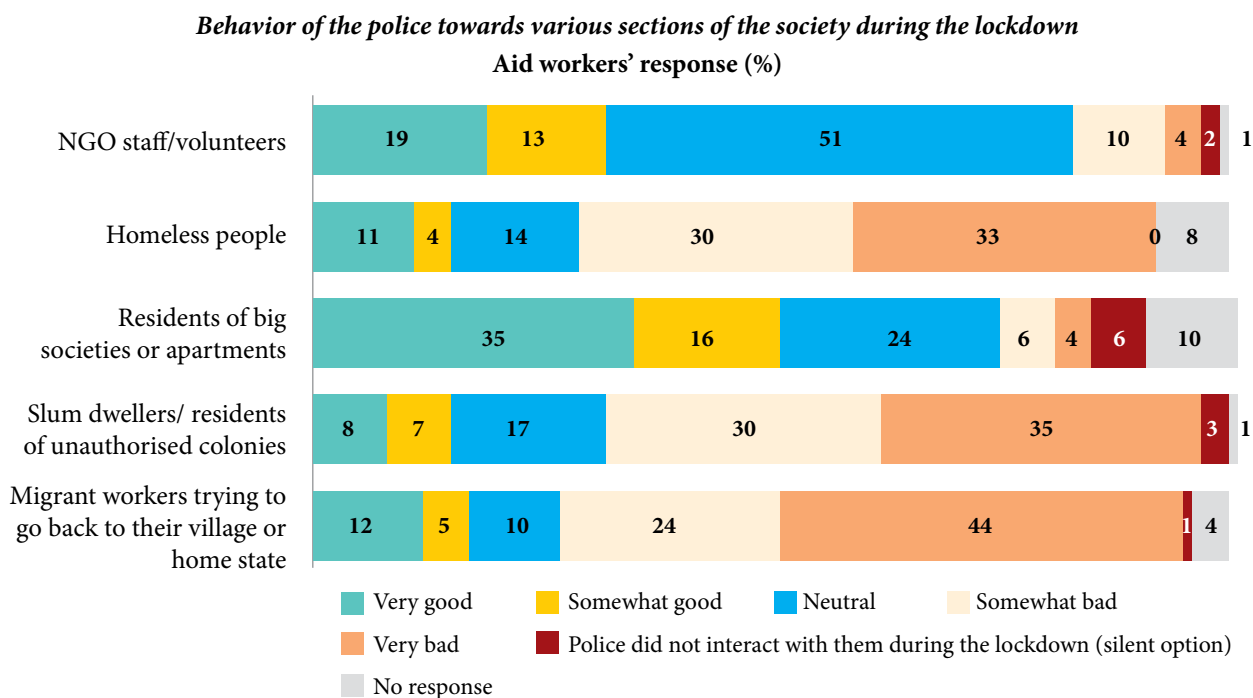
Aid workers' response (%)



Note: All figures are rounded off. N=114.

Question asked: “In your experience, during the lockdown, how frequently did the police use force against the common people—many times, sometimes, rarely or not at all?”

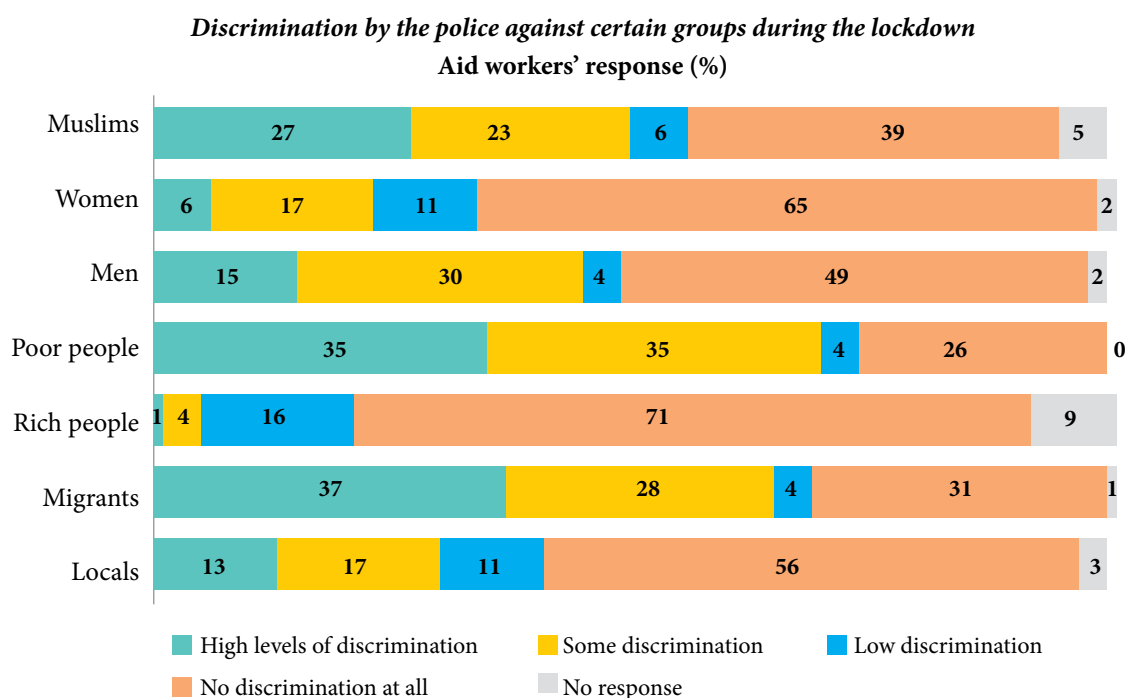
Figure 7.16 | More than one-third of the aid workers believe that police behaved very badly with the homeless people, slum dwellers and migrant workers during the lockdown



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "In your experience, during the lockdown, how was the behaviour of the police with the following groups of people—very good, somewhat good, neutral, somewhat bad, very bad or the police did not interact with them during the lockdown (silent option): a. NGO staff/ volunteers; b. Homeless people; c. Residents of big societies or apartments; d. Slum dwellers/ residents of unauthorised colonies; e. Migrant workers trying to go back to their village or home state."

Figure 7.17 | One in three aid workers feel that the police discriminated a lot against poor people and migrants during the lockdown



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: "In your experience, during the lockdown, did the police discriminate against the following groups or communities (probe whether highly discriminated against, somewhat discriminated against, hardly discriminated against or not discriminated against at all): a. Muslims; b. Women; c. Men; d. Poor people; e. Rich people; f. Migrants; g. Locals"

groups during the lockdown. These vigilante groups were often also communal in nature and without proper authority resorted to violence to enforce the lockdown rules. Several migrant workers reported that such vigilante groups visited their localities and beat up people for being outside, and the police did not intervene at all.

Attitude of the police towards vulnerable groups

In the survey, the aid workers were asked about the behaviour of the police towards both their own group, i.e., NGO staff or relief providers, as well as other groups of the society based on their place of residence. One out of two aid workers felt that the police behaviour towards them was neutral (51%), while 33 percent felt that the police behaviour towards them was good (very good and somewhat good combined). As for the other groups, according to the aid workers, the police behaved well with residents of big societies or apartments. Thirty-five percent said that the behaviour towards them was very good, 16 percent said it was good and 24 percent said it was neutral.

DISCRIMINATION

Reggie (name changed), an independent aid worker from the Delhi-NCR region narrated how a police officer in civil clothes approached him while he was distributing ration to the Muslim community and said, *"Inko marne do, zeher de dena chahiye in logon ko khaane me milakar. Inki vajah se coronavirus faila hai."* (Let them die. We should poison their food. Coronavirus has spread because of them). Reggie also narrated how in Mundka village, Delhi, a landlord had locked up 25-30 migrant workers and their families because they were Muslims and he feared they would spread the virus. He refused to let anyone, including aid workers, help them in any way. Despite complaints, police refused to take action since the area Pradhan was the landlord's friend and the Pradhan's son was in Delhi Police. After much insistence, the landlord allowed ration to be given to them, but refused to allow aid workers inside.

In contrast, the behaviour of the police towards slum dwellers was worse during the lockdown. Sixty-five percent of the aid workers said that the police behaved badly with them (somewhat bad and very bad combined). Similarly, 63 percent of the aid workers said that the behaviour of the police towards the homeless people during the lockdown was bad (somewhat and very combined). In the same vein, the aid workers also said that the police did not behave well with migrant workers who were trying to go back to their villages – a significant 44 percent of the aid workers reported that the police behaviour towards them was very bad and another 24 percent said it was somewhat

bad (Figure 7.16). However, the aid workers also said that some police personnel helped vulnerable communities who were particularly hit by the pandemic and the consequent lockdown. An aid worker from Delhi, for instance, witnessed the police providing the rickshaw pullers with a bus to take them to a shelter home.

The initial phase of the pandemic took a somewhat unexpected communal turn in India. When the news of several members of the Tablighi Jamaat at the Nizamuddin Markaz, New Delhi being infected with Covid-19 broke, there was widespread and unwarranted panic amongst the public. Many held the Muslims responsible for the spread of the virus. Media reports were full of instances of the public discriminating against and actively assaulting Muslims for no reason other than their religious identity, in the garb of Covid-19 panic. Previous research on the police attitude indicates a pre-existing bias amongst the police force against certain communities, such as Dalits, Adivasis and Muslims. For instance, according to the "Status of Policing in India Report 2019 — A Study of Police Adequacy and Working Conditions", one out of two police personnel feel that Muslims are likely to be 'naturally prone' towards committing crimes, with 14 percent personnel strongly reiterating this (Status of Policing in India Report, 2019).

Therefore, to understand whether such discriminations existed during this period, the aid workers were asked about the level of police discrimination during the lockdown against the following communities – Muslims, women, men, poor people, rich people, migrants and locals. One out of two aid workers said that the police discriminated against Muslims during the lockdown, with 27 percent reporting high levels of discrimination and 23 percent reporting medium level of discrimination. On the other hand, 39 percent of the aid workers also reported no discrimination against the Muslims by the police during the lockdown. Some respondents mentioned tribe-based discrimination by the police against nomadic tribes, Kalbelia tribes and the Saharia tribes. Several aid workers also noted caste-based discrimination, particularly against Dalits and safai karamcharis (sanitation workers). One aid worker related how several Dalits were arrested for breaking the lockdown rules in Ahmedabad and they had to pay bribe to be let off. On the other hand, the upper castes were not troubled by the police even if they broke the rules.

As per the survey analysis, there was a significant difference in the level of police discrimination between the poor people and the rich. While 70 percent of the aid workers felt that the police discriminated against the poor people (high and medium combined), a meagre five percent felt that there was discrimination against the rich. Sixty-five percent of the aid workers also believed that the police discriminated against

the migrants during the lockdown (high and medium combined) while 31 percent said that there was no discrimination. In comparison, 30 percent of the aid workers felt that the police discriminated against the locals during the lockdown (high and medium combined) and 57 percent reported no discrimination against the locals.

Satisfaction with the work of the police during the lockdown

In the “Status of Policing in India Report 2018 — A Study of Performance and Perceptions”, it was noted that in general, the public is largely satisfied with the work of the police in their locality, with one in four reporting high levels of satisfaction and 52 percent being somewhat satisfied with the police. In this study, we attempted to gauge the levels of satisfaction of both the aid workers and the migrant workers with the overall work and behaviour of the police during the lockdown.

Amongst the migrant workers, one in four reported being very satisfied with the police during the lockdown while another 35 percent were somewhat satisfied with the police. On the other hand, 21 percent of the surveyed migrants were very dissatisfied with the police during the lockdown. In comparison, the aid workers gave fewer extreme opinions: seventeen percent was very satisfied, 44 percent somewhat satisfied, another 22 percent somewhat

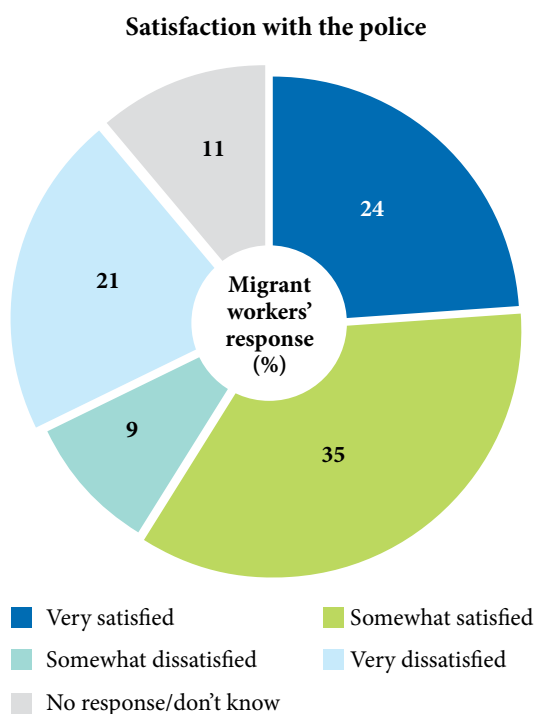
dissatisfied and a much smaller 13 percent very dissatisfied with the police during the lockdown. The overall proportion of migrant workers (59%) who were satisfied with the police (very and somewhat combined), is slightly lower than the overall proportion of aid workers (61%). This is somewhat inconsistent with the trend that has emerged from the previous sections, wherein the aid workers were generally more critical of the work of the police during the lockdown than the migrant workers. However, the difference is not very large. Yet, notably, the overall satisfaction levels of both the groups in this survey are lesser than the satisfaction levels of people with the police in normal times (78%), as noted in SPIR 2018.

Conclusion

This rapid study attempts to provide a snapshot of people’s experiences with the police during the lockdown, from the perspective of those who perhaps had the highest contact with the police – migrant workers and aid workers. The larger picture that emerges is at best mixed. Many respondents reported frequent instances of violence and brutality by the police. On the other hand, respondents also shared instances where the police went out of their way to help the people.

Police are often referred to as the most visible face of the criminal justice system. During the lockdown, however,

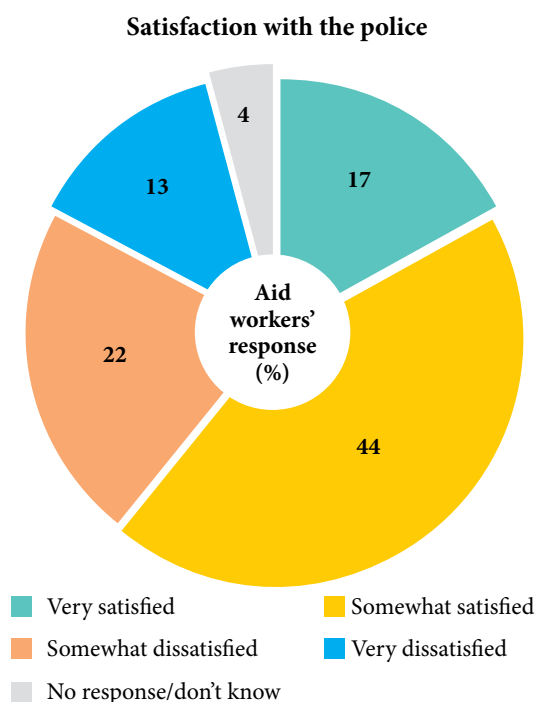
Figure 7.18 | One in four migrant workers are very satisfied with the work of the police during the lockdown



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: “How satisfied are you with the behaviour of the police that you encountered during the lockdown—very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?”

Figure 7.19 | One out of six aid workers are very satisfied with the work of the police during the lockdown



Note: All figures are rounded off.

Question asked: “Overall, how satisfied are you with the work of the police during the lockdown—very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied?”

their role expanded and they became the most visible face of the state itself. The police were the only agency ensuring not only the imposition of the lockdown but also providing basic facilities such as food and shelter to the people.

Some of the biggest concerns of the migrant workers were the availability of food or ration and the ability to return to their home states or villages. Forty four percent of the migrant workers interviewed reported that they rarely or never got ration/cooked food during the lockdown. Among those who did get a majority (58%) received it from NGOs or volunteers. This also highlights the importance of the civil society, NGOs and providers of relief and charity during these trying times. However, a significant number of aid workers (30%) reported that they frequently faced a situation where their staff refused to work because of the fear of the police. About 16 percent also frequently faced harassment at the hands of the police despite having requisite permission.

It is important to note that an overwhelming majority of aid workers (76%) sympathises with the police and strongly believes that they should not have been given the entire responsibility of enforcing the lockdown and that the other government agencies should also have been involved. A majority of aid workers also believes that the police personnel were not well equipped to deal with the situation and there was pressure on them from the government or the department to be strict. Nearly 80 percent of aid workers were of the strong opinion that if people were informed about the lockdown earlier, they would have faced lesser hardships.

Nearly half of the aid workers interviewed (46%) reported witnessing many cases of physical assault by the police during the lockdown. Eighteen percent of the migrant workers also reported facing physical assault by the police many times while 27 percent reported facing sometimes. Fifty-one percent migrant workers and 27 percent aid workers believed that the use of force by the police against people was very common during the lockdown.

As we have seen in the Status of Policing in India Reports 2018 and 2019, the police, even under normal circumstances, clearly display caste, class, gender and religious identity-based prejudices and discriminate against the vulnerable groups. Such acts of discrimination were reported during the lockdown as well. A significant proportion of aid workers felt that the police behaved very badly with the migrant workers who were trying to go back to their villages or home states (44%), slum dwellers (35%) and homeless people (33%), during the lockdown. They were also of the opinion that the police was very discriminatory towards poor people (35%) and Muslims (27%).

Despite this, a significant proportion of the respondents reported high levels of satisfaction with the work of the police during the lockdown. Amongst the migrant workers, 24 percent were very satisfied, 35 percent somewhat satisfied and 21 percent were completely dissatisfied with the police's work. Whereas amongst aid workers, 17 percent were very satisfied, 44 percent were somewhat satisfied and 13 percent were completely dissatisfied with the police.

As mentioned earlier, the data from these surveys are not representative and should only be read as indicative of larger trends, and things need to be further probed. The data collection for the rapid study was done in the months of July to September 2020, which was when the strict lockdown guidelines were gradually lifted, thus this data is important in its timeliness as well as its analysis of larger situation of some of the most vulnerable groups vis-à-vis their experiences with the police. Instances of both extreme violence by the police and excellent service by the police have surfaced in this study.

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Policing during the Pandemic: *Areas of concern and the ways ahead*

A police officer stands guard out of a venue where farmer leaders meet with government representatives in New Delhi, India, December 5, 2020.
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Policing during the pandemic:

Areas of concern and the ways ahead

The year 2020 was staggering for the world at large, with a once in a lifetime pandemic impacting people, businesses, governance and basic freedom of the very last person. In India, the police, who are otherwise the gatekeepers of the justice delivery systems, also became the frontline enforcers of the restrictions put in place due to a health emergency. The lockdown imposed in India from March 25, 2020 onwards was one of the most stringent across the world. This inevitably gave huge discretionary power and responsibility to the police personnel who were entrusted with the enforcement of sudden lockdown restrictions without adequate consultation, training or guidance. Considering lockdowns as the primary measure to contain the spread of the contagion in the absence of a vaccine or pharmaceutical treatment, policymakers were proactive about their enforcement. With every other government agency, courts and modes of transportation shutting down, the visibility of the police was amplified during this extraordinary period of home confinement.

Lockdown, as a widespread coronavirus mitigation policy, was also a sudden upending of the normal state of affairs. In the world's second most populous country, it was bound to cause friction between the common man on the street and the police, the enforcers of these harsh and unyielding restrictions. The conflict took some extreme forms, such as custodial deaths or torture by the police due to lockdown violations, violent protests by migrants wanting to go back home amidst mobility restrictions, to name a few. In this report, however, instead of focusing on the most extreme cases, the attempt is to get a larger understanding of the functioning of the police and their interactions with people during the lockdown through the eyes of both entities.

While the previous chapters contain the key findings from the surveys as well as the media analysis, the concluding chapter focusses on some of the areas of concern arising

out of the analysis regarding police functioning and the ways ahead. Some of the core issues of policing requiring urgent improvement, as discovered in the study, have been thematically discussed below. These include the lessons gleaned from the survey of common people and police personnel as well as from the findings of the separate rapid surveys of migrant and aid workers.

Police discrimination during the lockdown

Policing as a system in India is inherently biased against the poor. This has been evinced time and again through government's own data, such as the class profile of under-trials, as well as national-level surveys, including the Status of Policing of India Reports 2018 and 2019. However, in this study we see that the bias also translates into active discrimination against the poorest at a time when many were forced to be entirely dependent on the state to access basic needs such as food and medicines. While the bias is limited to rare interactions between the police and the poor under normal circumstances, the situation was different during the lockdown. In this period of complete indoor confinement, the police acted as an interface for accessing even the most basic essentials, leading to the aggravation of their implicit bias.

The survey with the common people reveals that the poorest and the lower classes were more than twice as likely as the rich to report facing a lot of difficulties in accessing basic needs during the lockdown, even though the poor were least likely to report the spread of Covid-19 during the first wave of the pandemic.

Unsurprisingly, the poor (58%) and the lower classes (54%) were also nearly twice as likely than the rich (28%) to report having to go to work during the lockdown due to financial difficulty. This increased not only their risk of contracting the virus but also of having an interface with the police,

Note: The study was conducted during the months of October and November in 2020, and therefore, it is confined to the first wave of the Covid-19 and the first phase of the consequential lockdown(s) that were imposed in 2020.

responsible for enforcing lockdown restrictions. But as the survey reveals, homes were also often taken away from the poor during the lockdown due to forceful evictions by the landlords. The poor (12%) were three times more likely than the rich (4%) to report many cases of forceful eviction of tenants during the lockdown.

A clear digital divide was also evident at a time when much of the information was conveyed through online platforms. At 25 percent, the poor people were least likely to have downloaded the Arogya Setu app, while 12 percent of the poor, highest across all classes, did not have a smartphone. The communication gap and neglect were also conspicuous offline, with the poorest least likely to have witnessed awareness campaigns by the police during the lockdown.

The differences in experiences expectedly led to differences in the perceptions of policing during the lockdown across classes. The poor and lower class were most fearful of the police during the lockdown. In particular, they were fearful of physical violence by the police. They were also more likely to see police instructions during lockdown as more threatening than as acts of care or protection.

The police, on the other hand, were also more likely to report poor localities as being least compliant with the lockdown rules. This finding, however, needs to be understood with several caveats. Firstly, it cannot be determined just by this finding whether it is simply the perception of the police because of an inherent bias or the ground reality. Further, even if it was assumed to be the ground reality, it needs to be contextualised with the pressing need for the poor and daily wagers to earn an income for accessing the basic essentials. This fundamental need takes precedence over the health risk posed by Covid-19. According to a study conducted by the Pew Research Centre, poverty may have doubled during the first wave of the pandemic in 2020. Thus, instead of simply reading this finding as evidence of the poor's disdain for lockdown rules, it needs to be further probed and understood in all its complexity.

Further, while a majority of the respondents felt that the police was efficient in controlling the outbreak of the pandemic during the first wave (overall, 40% considered it to be highly efficient), the poor were slightly less likely to believe so. They were also slightly less likely to believe that the police are capable of handling such pandemic situations.

These relatively less flattering opinions of the poor about police performance are perhaps impacted by their experiences—that of facing persistent discrimination by the police. The poor (56%) were far less likely than the rich (65%) to believe that the restrictions imposed during the lockdown were equal for everyone. This indicates that they

thought the police discriminated against them during the lockdown. The police personnel, on the other hand, largely believe that the lockdown restrictions were the same for everyone, with 71 percent personnel agreeing with the statement. However, a significant 26 percent police personnel also believed that compared to the poor, the rich got away easily with flouting lockdown restrictions.

Police presence and surveillance increased considerably during the lockdown. While a majority of the people, 71 percent, felt secure with the increased police surveillance, the poor were less likely to feel secure (66%) and more likely to feel threatened (20%) with enhanced police presence.

The perception of the police's bias against the poor, particularly during the lockdown, are further confirmed through the rapid survey of aid and migrant workers. The survey's key findings, reported in Chapter 7, reveal that one out of three aid workers (35%) believe that police discriminated a lot against poor people during the lockdown.

The class bias in India is intricately linked with other social identities, mostly caste, tribe and religion. The Indian criminal justice system shows evidence of systemic bias against minorities and vulnerable communities such as the SCs, STs, OBCs and Muslims. As reported in SPIR 2018 and 2019, on the one hand, there is over-representation of these groups in the Indian prisons across most states, on the other they are severely under-represented in the police forces. In addition, there's a sense of discrimination among the common public against these groups.

In the initial days of the first wave of the pandemic, in India, the health emergency took a communal turn. An international gathering of Tablighis, or Muslim preachers intending to spread the faith, took place in New Delhi's Nizamuddin area, drawing hundreds of foreign nationals from various countries, despite a government order prohibiting large gatherings (Kidwai and Sahar, 2020). This led to a spike in the number of infected people and was termed as a super-spreader event. This led to exceedingly communal reporting by the media, some going so far as to call it the "Covid *Jihaad*" (Shantha, 2020). Presumably, such sentiments trickled down to the larger public as well, with the police being no exception.

In the rapid study of migrant and aid workers, it was found that apart from the poor, Dalits and other minorities were most likely to report forceful eviction of tenants during the lockdown. Further, one out of two aid workers also said that the police discriminated against Muslims during the lockdown, with 50 percent reporting high or medium levels of discrimination.

All these findings reinforce the existing police bias against vulnerable communities. They reflect the further distancing of people from the lowest economic strata and vulnerable groups from not just the criminal justice system but also from platforms and interfaces granting access to basic services during the lockdown.

Plight of the migrant workers and differences in perceptions of policing

One group which was arguably the worst impacted by the sudden imposition of the lockdown were migrant workers, a proportion of whom are dependent on casual or daily labour to make ends meet. The misery of migrants was one of the biggest non-medical tragedies of the pandemic and a horrific chapter in India's modern history. Travelling from all parts of the country, the migrant workers in major Indian cities or industrial towns had their lives and livelihoods completely upended in a heartbeat. They were suddenly stranded without a source of income, unable to cover basic costs of rent and food and away from their homes and families during one of the worst global health emergencies of the century. These circumstances forced many to walk along interstate highways, balancing their children and belongings on their shoulders, in order to reach homes that were hundreds of miles away. Even as a nationwide lockdown put brakes on the movements of its citizens, impoverished migrant workers, fearing hunger more than the disease, decided to take to the road, triggering one of the largest events of reverse migration in the country.

This mass exodus, of the poor, desperate and fearful, unsurprisingly, caused them to face-off with the police, often leading to violence. The use of violence by the police against the migrants is also confirmed by this study, with as many as one out of two police personnel (49%) reporting frequent use of force against migrant workers travelling back home. Further, one out of three police personnel (33%) frequently encountered situations where the migrants were trying to enter shelter homes but police used force to prevent them from doing so.

Common people largely felt that the migrant crisis could have been averted with a longer notice period before the lockdown, with more than three out of five people agreeing with the statement (64%). Similar sentiments have also been expressed by the migrant and the aid workers from Delhi, Rajasthan and Gujarat who were surveyed for the rapid study. Four out of five migrant workers (78%) and aid workers (80%) believed that if people were informed of the lockdown earlier, they would have faced lesser difficulties.

The police personnel also reported facing difficulties in controlling the situation. Thirty-eight percent police per-

sonnel said that it was very difficult to control migrants walking towards their homes, while 44 percent said that it was somewhat difficult.

The experiences of the migrant workers also speak volumes about their troubles negotiating the lockdown. In the rapid study, nearly half of the migrant workers reported facing assault by the police during the lockdown. Further, amongst those migrant workers who travelled back to their home states/villages, one in 10 were assaulted by the police during the journey. Nearly three out of five migrant workers (57%) reported frequent use of force by the police against the common people during the lockdown.

Apart from experiencing extreme violence, migrant workers also reported the absence of basic infrastructure to help them deal with the lockdown restrictions. With the closure of businesses, factories and nearly all kinds of manual or casual labour, many became dependant on the state for food and ration. Yet, 10 percent migrant workers reported never getting ration or cooked food during the lockdown, while 34 percent reported rarely receiving it. Even amongst those who received food, only seven percent reported getting ration or cooked food from the police, while 33 percent got it from other government officials. A majority was dependant on non-state actors for this primal need.

Notably, however, the police were also lauded by many for helping the migrant workers as well as common people. Twenty-one percent of the aid workers surveyed in the rapid study said that the police were very helpful in the distribution of food/ration to the people. In the larger survey of common people in SPIR 2020-21 Volume II, 44 percent people reported witnessing the police facilitating the homeward journey of stranded migrants at bus terminals or railway stations. Forty nine percent witnessed them facilitating the journey of those who were traveling on foot, 57 percent saw them giving food to the migrant workers, while 35 percent said that the police made arrangements for the stay of migrant workers. Twenty-two percent common people also believed that one task that the police performed well during the lockdown was providing help to the poor and migrant workers.

The larger picture emerging from both the studies, however, is of the poor plight of the migrant workers during the first wave of the pandemic. Saddled with a lack of access to basic facilities, facing the brunt of police violence and experiencing the absence of state support — food/ration, shelter or travel facilities to take them back home, the lot of migrant workers were both tragic and unfair. This highlights the need for better preparedness in the future for vulnerable groups and framing policies keeping their in-

terests and necessities in mind. The survey with the police personnel also reveals the policy confusion regarding the migrant exodus. About a quarter of the police personnel (23%) faced confusion regarding who was responsible for arranging shelter for stranded migrant workers.

Differences in policing during lockdown across Tier I and Tier II/III cities

While policing in India is a state subject, during the initial lockdown in the first wave of the pandemic, the Disaster Management Act 2005 was invoked across the country to impose the lockdown measures. The protocols for the entire country were the same, differing only on the basis of the level of spread of the virus in a locality. Yet, we find from this study that the experiences of the people as well as the police personnel were different in Tier I cities when compared to Tier II/III cities. Though the variations were many, some of the larger trends that emerged were as follows:

1. Common people from Tier I cities had better access to basic facilities during the lockdown:

The survey data reveals that the common people in Tier I cities had better access to services such as information regarding the lockdown, awareness campaigns, etc., while those in Tier II/III cities found it difficult to access even essential supplies. Nearly one out of three respondents (29%) in Tier II and III cities found it very difficult to access essential supplies during the lockdown. On the other hand, about 20 percent people in Tier I cities faced the same. Further, a higher proportion of people in Tier I cities received information regarding the lockdown rules through TV and social media than those from Tier II and III cities. Common people from the Tier I cities were also more likely to witness awareness campaigns related to Covid-19 by the police, as compared to the people from Tier II and III cities.

2. Higher confrontations between people and police in Tier I cities, but more instances of police excesses in Tier II and III cities:

Despite the greater engagement of the police with the citizens in Tier I cities during the lockdown, there were more confrontations between the people and police in the Tier I cities, according to the police personnel. While 45 percent police personnel from Tier I cities reported confrontations at local shops selling essential items, the proportion crossed the half-way mark in the other three situations in Tier I cities-- while checking travel passes, in containment zones and during food distribution. In Tier II and III cities, on the other hand, less than 40 percent of the personnel reported confrontations in all four situations.

This conflict is also confirmed through the common people's perceptions of the police presence during the lockdown. People from Tier I cities were far more likely to see the increased police presence during the lockdown as a threat, with one in four person reporting so, than those in Tier II/III cities (8 percentage points lesser). Those from Tier I cities were also more likely to see the messaging from the police during the lockdown as a threat rather than an act of care and protection.

However, the people in Tier II/III cities were slightly more likely to report incidents of police excesses and brutality during the lockdown. They were more likely to witness the police being rude or using force against the civilians during the lockdown. They were also slightly more likely to report seeing the police using some kind of force to enforce the lockdown rules.

3. Common people from Tier II/III cities had a better perception of police performance during the lockdown:

Common people of Tier II and III cities had a better perception of police performance than those from Tier I cities. People from the former were more likely to report that the police were highly efficient in controlling the Covid-19 outbreak. A higher proportion of people from Tier II/III cities also believed that the police were highly capable of handling the pandemic and controlled the situation well despite a sudden lockdown. Further, while residents of Tier I cities were more likely to believe that the sudden lockdown announcement by the government made it very difficult for the police to control the situation, residents of Tier II/III cities were more likely to believe the opposite, i.e. despite a sudden lockdown, police controlled the situation really well. People from Tier II and III cities were also more likely to report feeling secure with increased police presence during the lockdown.

4. Police personnel from Tier I cities had a higher workload during the lockdown:

With a greater rate of infection spread in Tier I cities during the first Covid-19 wave, the workload of the police personnel was also along predictable lines. Police personnel from Tier I cities reported being over-worked even during normal times, with seven in 10 working for more than 11 hours a day. This figure increased to nine out of 10 (92%) police personnel, when the lockdown was enforced. In comparison, in Tier II/III cities, this proportion rose from 57 percent in normal times to 71 percent during the lockdown. Further, police personnel in Tier I cities were far more likely to report that it was very difficult for them to manage the people during the lockdown. They also reported a higher increase in police surveillance during the lockdown than their counterparts from Tier II/III cities.

As a result, the level of stress during the period was also higher among personnel from Tier I cities, with a slightly higher proportion of personnel from these cities (a lot and somewhat combined) reporting a negative impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on their mental health.

5. However, police personnel from Tier I cities also had access to better facilities and training for the lockdown:

It is important to note that the increased workload and level of stress are not indicators of the availability of facilities for the police personnel. The facilities, in fact, were largely better for those in Tier I cities. Personnel in Tier I cities were provided better facilities during the lockdown, as compared to those in Tier II/III cities. This included higher provision of equipment for duty during the pandemic, better hygiene conditions and more insurance covers. Personnel in Tier I cities also had better safety arrangements such as special accommodation, while a higher proportion of personnel received special training and more departmentally arranged health check-ups during the lockdown. Personnel with co-morbidities in Tier I cities were also less likely to be posted in high-risk zones.

Three out of five police personnel from Tier I cities (59%) claimed to have received special training for the management of the lockdown restrictions. This was five percentage points higher than their counterparts in Tier II and III cities. Further, while 56 percent personnel from Tier II/III cities reported getting PPE kits when deployed in sensitive zones, this proportion increased to 71 percent in Tier I cities.

Police stations in Tier I cities were also better equipped with contactless methods of managing the crowd, through equipment such as thermal cameras and sensor-based sanitisation machines. Further, personnel from these cities were also more likely to rate the hygiene conditions of their police stations as 'very good.' They were also more likely to report the adequate availability of essential items such as masks, sanitisers and soaps.

On the other hand, police personnel from Tier II and III cities were more likely to report the shortage of staff as an obstacle in managing the lockdown. They were also more likely to report the lack of financial resources, compared to personnel from Tier I cities.

Police brutality and use of violence to enforce the lockdown

A very disturbing aspect of policing during the lockdown was the allegedly liberal use of force by the personnel to enforce protocol and compel people to adopt pandemic-safe

behaviour. With huge discretionary powers available to them and a general sense of bewilderment among common people about the contagion, the police used threat as their most common tool to confine people to their homes.

When asked about the use of force by the police, while a majority of the people surveyed denied witnessing the same, a notable proportion, (about one in three), also reported that the police were rude (30%) and frequently used force against civilians (36%). When further asked about the frequency of the use of force by the police, such as hitting people with a *danda* (baton) to make them follow the lockdown rules, an unflattering picture emerged. Close to three out of five said that such force was used often (19%) or sometimes (39%) by the police during the lockdown.

Police personnel also reported having frequently resorting to imposing fines and using force to implement lockdown guidelines. While seven percent said that they used force very frequently, 27 percent claimed that they had to use force a few times during the last few months. Evidently, there is great variation regarding the use of force in the responses of police personnel and the common people, with the latter more likely to report it.

Such liberal use of force predictably instilled high levels of fear amongst the people. Fifty-seven percent people reported being fearful of the police imposing fines for violation of lockdown rules, while 55 percent reported being fearful of the police beating them (29% reported a lot of fear and 26% reported some fear). Further, close to one out of five people (18%) also felt threatened by the higher visibility of the police during the lockdown.

The analysis of media reports of the lockdown period show that migrant workers were most likely to be at the receiving end of police brutality. Nearly one out of 10 news stories from the sample are on police excesses and negligence.

The migrant and aid workers from three states, surveyed for a separate, rapid study, also resoundingly confirmed the excessive use of force by the police during the lockdown. Nearly three out of five migrant workers (57%) and four out of five aid workers (80%) reported frequent use of force by the police against the common people during the lockdown.

All these findings present a grim picture of the misuse of discretionary powers by the police, which often turned to violence. Such practices need to be prevented in the future handling of similar situations and safeguards for the same need to be put in place much in advance.

Increasing surveillance and selective use of technology

The lockdown not just ushered in increased police presence in public places, but also a hike in newer modes of surveillance of the public. While surveillance in general falls under the ambit of policing duties to ensure law and order, this seems to be a different domain. The uninhibited use of newer forms of technology for surveillance, without proper legal backing, can easily lead to infringement of people's right to privacy.

While the survey questions did not cover this aspect of policing during the lockdown, in the analysis of news reports it was observed that the police extensively used advance surveillance tools such as drone cameras, face detection technology, GPS-enabled systems like geofencing etc. to enforce the lockdown. The growing reliance on advanced technology for policing received high praise from the media but few critical questions were raised pertaining to their legality, adherence to regulations, and data protection methods pertaining to their use.

In the surveys, on the other hand, the issues related to physical surveillance of the public were covered. There was an expansion of strict police surveillance during the lockdown, so as to apprehend the violators. With hardly any exception, this was supported by almost all the police personnel interviewed. Bifurcating further, almost three-fourths reported that the surveillance increased a lot while nearly one-fifths reported a somewhat rise. The common people also affirmed this, with close to three out of four people saying that police presence had increased during the lockdown. Further, a majority were asked to show some documentation when they had an interaction with the police. A smaller proportion, just about one out of three, said that they rarely or never had to show their IDs or documents while travelling during the lockdown. Notably, a significant proportion of the common people were not comfortable with the increased police presence during the lockdown and one out of five people looked at it as a threat.

The increased surveillance of the public also came at the cost of flouting of legal procedures by the police. Just one out of three police personnel said that they could completely follow proper legal procedures while maintaining law and order and investigating crimes during the lockdown. A majority reported it being possible only to 'some extent', while one in 10 reported that it was extremely difficult to follow proper legal procedures during this period. News reports also suggest significant governmental pressure on the police to ensure compliance with lockdown norms through whatever means necessary.

Findings of the survey of aid workers in the separate rapid study also suggest that the police used wide discretion during their increased surveillance in the lockdown period. This created problems for the aid workers on the field, working to provide relief to the distressed and vulnerable. Their biggest problem while dealing with the police or government authorities was not getting permissions to go out despite the essential nature of their relief work. The next problem was harassment by the police despite having the requisite permissions. The aid staff and volunteers refused to work during the lockdown because of their fear of the police.

The unquestioned use of technology for surveillance during the lockdown may carry over to normal times, and practised later without proper legal sanctions. This could compromise the right to privacy of individuals, among other issues. Similarly, the increased physical surveillance contributed towards creating a chilling effect. It had the unintended consequence of creating a sense of fear amongst the public, and inhibiting aid workers from helping the disadvantaged in their hour of need. Both such practices need to be publicly discussed and deliberated upon before employing them for similar emergencies in the future.

Working conditions of the police during the lockdown

The pandemic brought out the fault lines in the policing system in India not only with respect to the personnel's behaviour towards the public, but also highlighted the gaps within the police force. As was discussed extensively in the SPIR 2019, the police forces across the states suffer from some major shortcomings. These frailties not only worsen their working conditions within the system but also cause other problems by reducing the institution's representativeness, diversity, accessibility and credibility.

Even though the lockdown rules imposed were as unprecedented for the police personnel as for the larger public, the former were responsible for enforcing these rules. Thus, an already over-stretched system had to spread itself too thin in order to discharge an expanded repertoire of duties. In fact, as many as 59 percent police personnel said that they found it very difficult to enforce the suddenly announced countrywide lockdown, while 34 percent found the situation to be somewhat difficult.

The Indian police forces, which are already under-staffed, were pushed to their limits during the lockdown. One out of two police personnel felt that the shortage of staff was a major hurdle in performing their duties during the lockdown.

Since three out of five police personnel (62%) reported to be working for 11 hours or more daily even before the lockdown, one can imagine its impact on the already overburdened police force. During the lockdown, as many as four out of five police personnel (78%) reported working for at least 11 hours a day, 16 percentage points more than in normal times. The proportion of those working for 10 hours or less was almost halved during the lockdown, compared to normal times. Further, with more than a quarter of police personnel reporting to have worked for at least 15 straight hours a day, during the lockdown, one can well imagine the physical and mental toll of this inhuman work pressure. Nine in every 10 personnel said that they were greatly impacted or somewhat impacted mentally during the lockdown.

For police personnel, a country-wide shutdown had a pose of negative consequences. Managing the lockdown not only led to stress related to long working hours and the demanding nature of duty, but they also faced persistent risks of contracting the virus as frontline workers. A majority of the police personnel (53%) interviewed were very fearful of getting infected. Around one out of three (31%) were somewhat worried about contracting Covid-19. The risk of contracting the virus also extended to the family member of the police personnel, with 68 percent police personnel reporting having to go back to their homes and families after duty during this time.

The risk of contracting the virus was even more palpable for those with co-morbidities, and hence, more vulnerable. A significant proportion, more than two out of five police personnel reported that vulnerable police personnel, i.e., those with some co-morbidities, were not shifted to the low-risk areas for their duties. In fact, police personnel with existing co-morbidities were more likely to be working for longer hours during the lockdown. Further, as reported by one-third of the police personnel, essential items such as PPE kits were not available to those posted in sensitive areas.

The prevention of Covid-19 mandated that health protocols be followed uniformly in a country as large as India. The onus of high levels of discipline was placed on health workers, sanitation workers, and police personnel. An overwhelming majority (64%) of common people believed that the police were following Covid-19 protocols properly and taking all precautions while on duty. However, one in three had a dissenting opinion.

A crucial pre-condition for undertaking the uphill task of enforcing a country-wide shutdown is proper training, as clearly laid down in the Standard Operating Procedures for handling such extraordinary circumstances. However,

a notable chunk of the police personnel, two out of five, denied receiving special training for the Covid-19 outbreak. However, more than half said that such training was imparted to them. Unsurprisingly, the police personnel reported facing some confusion regarding proper procedures to be followed, especially related to making arrangements for the migrant workers.

In general, southern states such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu were more proactive in providing special training to personnel during the pandemic, as well as ensuring better availability of safety equipment such as PPE kits, etc. However, states such as West Bengal were least prepared under these parameters. (We have not given detailed state-wise figures in this study for the simple reason that the surveys were conducted in a limited number of districts in each of the 10 states covered)

All of these findings regarding the deplorable working conditions of the police personnel bring to light the urgent need for strengthening the basic foundations of the police system in India. These bare-bones reforms in the system are crucial even for the normal functioning of the police and have been brought under a glaring spotlight post a health emergency of this scale and penetration.

Looking ahead

Since this chapter looks specifically at the areas which need urgent attention, many of the positive findings of the report have been understated, such as the overall level of satisfaction of the public with policing during the lockdown.

The Indian police, whose command is divided under the states, had a four-hour notice to enforce a nationwide lockdown in a country of 1.3 billion people. Several issues, arising out of an abrupt lockdown announcement handed out centrally in a federal country could have been averted by holding consultations with the states and the implementing agencies. Our experience of dealing with a pandemic of this magnitude strengthens the case for evolving more rational and broad-based responses, through institutional mechanisms and specific Acts of Parliament. The implementing agencies like the police, in the same vein, should have well-deliberated plans, practices, flowcharts and SOPs of their own to deal with disasters and medical emergencies.

The police personnel deployed on the ground continued their routine duties like maintaining law and order, and crime control, along with executing stringent and rapidly changing lockdown rules. They took on their new duties because they had no choice. But in the absence of well-established practices, they were made to use their discretion

in subjective and arbitrary ways. And that is why, perhaps, police practices during the lockdown have had both positive as well as negative consequences. As reported in the qualitative findings of the rapid study in Chapter 7, several police personnel went out of their way to help the people in need. The disease, and the consequential lockdowns, brought police personnel into direct contact with people in need of urgent assistance. To a large extent, they used their imagination to modify their primary role and make the nature of their duties more flexible.

This volume of SPIR 2020-21 attempts to bring out the overall trends in policing during this extraordinary phase that India, and the world at large, is going through. The surveys with the common people and the police personnel shed light on the overall perceptions and experiences of both these stakeholders. It has to be borne in mind that in normal circumstances, but even more during the pandemic, both the general public and the police personnel had little say in the policymaking around pandemic response. The declaration of the lockdown at the national level was unprecedented for both these entities. For the most part, the police was simply a tool of the state to enforce the lockdown guidelines and check violations. As was also found in the analysis of the news reports, there was significant pressure on the police from the government to ensure compliance with lockdown measures through whatever means possible.

However, it needs to be noted, that most of the areas of concern and shortcomings in the practices followed by the police during the lockdown are in fact pre-existing ailments of the system. These gaps have been highlighted time and again by reformers and advocates of the cause, but which got further exacerbated during the pandemic. If nothing else, these endemic shortcomings of the institution need to be addressed urgently through intensive structural changes. The findings of the study is a nudge to policymakers for overhauling several aspects of policing.

To begin with, they need to play close attention to improved caste, community and gender diversity in the force, increasing its sensitivity through regular training, putting safeguards in place against police excesses and brutalities,

minimising discretion and ensuring equitable distribution of resources and facilities across rural, urban, Tier I, Tier II and III cities. All of this will not be accomplished without improving the working conditions of the police. Undoubtedly, the use of social media tools has penetrated even the most rural parts of the country, yet the most widely used means of communication between the police and the people, as found through the survey, were loudspeakers. This restrictive and selective use of technology only for surveillance purposes instead of improved communication during the pandemic points to a glaring gap in the availability and application of resources.

At the same time, practices and mechanisms must be developed for building institutional memory of all the lessons learnt while tackling law and order during a public health emergency and interacting with citizens during an extraordinary disruption. Building a preparatory knowledge base and establishing clear protocols for similarly unprecedented future events is an important task that the policymakers should focus on urgently. Only a combination of these measures can improve the efficiency and accountability of the police, while restoring the trust-deficit in the agency.

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Appendices

Survey Methodology

Lokniti-Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), in collaboration with Common Cause, has been preparing a series of baseline documents titled the ‘Status of Policing in India Report’ (SPIR). The idea of the SPIR series is to improve policing through a study of the official data, ground-based surveys and wide-ranging research conducted in collaboration or cooperation with the academia, civil society and government agencies. Two editions of the report have already been published—SPIR 2018, on common people’s perception of policing gauged through a citizens’ survey and a performance evaluation of policing using official data; and SPIR 2019, which was a study of the working conditions and experiences of police personnel gathered through a nation-wide survey, along with measuring police adequacy using official data.

Third in the series of the SPIR, the 2020-2021 study is divided into two volumes, one focusing on ‘policing in conflict-affected regions’ and the other to understand the various aspects of ‘policing in the Covid-19 pandemic’. The key objective of Volume I of the study is to provide state-wise analysis of performance and perception of policing in the areas where some form of conflict, extremism, or insurgency prevails. Volume II aims at understanding the challenges faced by the police in the states that are most-affected due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the consequential lockdowns, as well as the experiences of the common people with the police and their perception on various aspects of policing under special and exceptional circumstances created due to the pandemic. Therefore, for both Volume I and Volume II, we have interviewed the police personnel as well as the civilians, with the help of separate questionnaires.

The present report ‘*Status of Policing in India Report 2020-2021. (Volume II): Policing in the Covid-19 Pandemic*’ is based on a sample survey of 3,607 individuals (1,198 police personnel and 2,409 civilians), across 19 cities of 10 states/union territories of India. The survey was conducted by Lokniti-Programme for Comparative Democracy, Cen-

tre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), in the months of October and November 2020.

Sampling details

The study aims at understanding the challenges faced by the police in the states that are most-affected due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the consequential lockdowns, as well as the experiences of the common people with the police and their perceptions of various aspects of policing under special and exceptional circumstances created due to Covid-19.

A total of 360 interviews (120 interviews of the police personnel and 240 of the civilians) were targeted from each of the 10 states/UTs in the sample. Details of the different stages of sampling are shared below:

Stage 1: Sampling of states

For the study of policing during the pandemic, we short-listed 10 states. Eight of these feature among the ten most affected states i.e. those having the highest number of Covid-19 cases as of August 15, 2020, while the other two are Gujarat (for being one of the worst-hit states due to the migrant crisis) and Kerala (for being one of the earliest regions to have been hit by Covid-19).

Stage 2: Sampling of cities

One Tier-I city and one Tier-II or III city with the maximum number of Covid-19 cases as of August 15, 2020 was shortlisted from each of the states for the study. In the states which do not have a Tier I city, the two most affected Tier-II or III cities were selected.

Table A is the list of states and cities shortlisted for the study.

Stage 3: Sampling of respondents

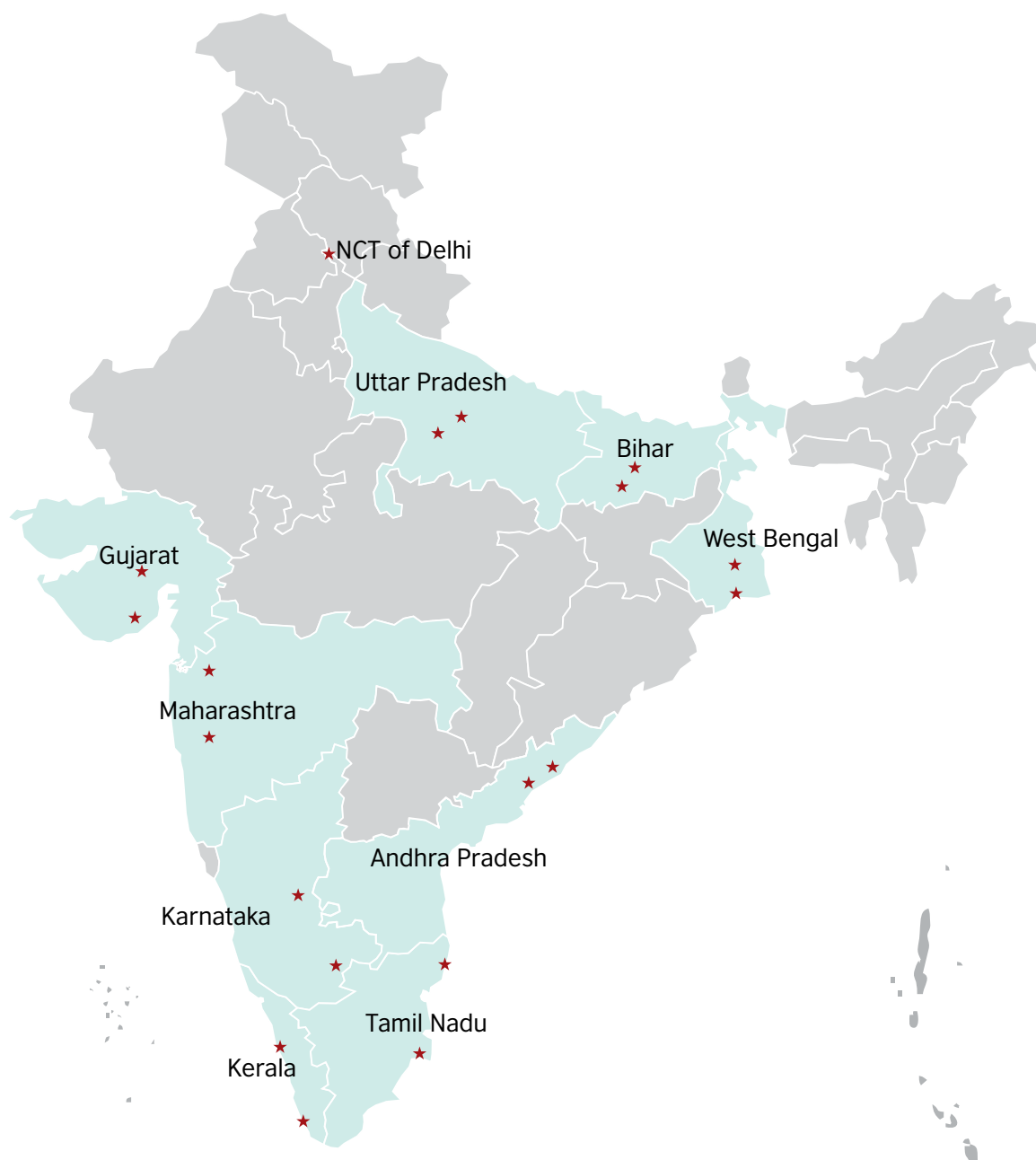
For civilians, 120 interviews were targeted from each of the sampled city, making it 240 in each of the sampled state. In each of the sampled city, two to three locations were

Table A | Sample frame

State/UT	Cities	
Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam	East Godavari
Bihar	Patna	Muzaffarpur
Gujarat	Ahmedabad*	Surat
Karnataka	Bengaluru*	Bellary
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	Malappuram
Maharashtra	Pune*	Nashik
Tamil Nadu	Chennai*	Thiruvallur
The NCT of Delhi	Delhi*	
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	Kanpur Nagar
West Bengal	Kolkata*	North 24 Parganas
Total number of cities	19	

*Tier I cities

Note: The interviews could not be conducted in Mumbai, hence it was replaced with Pune which had the second highest Covid-19 cases among Tier I cities in Maharashtra, after Mumbai. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh do not have a Tier I city; hence interviews were conducted in Tier II or III cities with highest number of Covid-19 cases.



shortlisted in each of the four different regions within the city- North, East, South and West. Priority was given to those locations that were relatively more affected by the pandemic. Interviews were also conducted in the market/trading areas and some other public spaces where citizen-police interaction was more likely to occur frequently. Within a particular locality, the interviews were taken from all types of localities- poor, lower-class, middle-class, and rich. The sample was divided in the following proportion across the four types of localities- poor (*slums/jhuggis/basti/shanties*): 20 percent; lower (*houses with just one-two rooms or one BHK houses/flats/apartments*): 40 percent; middle-class (*three BHK houses/flats/apartments*): 30 percent; rich (*four BHK houses/flats/apartments, independent bungalows, posh colonies*): 10 percent. Ensuring that the sample is spread across all the houses/streets/colonies in a given location, depending on the size of the locality, a person was interviewed in every third or fifth house. To make the sample representative, the targeted male-female ratio was equal, i.e. 50:50, while the targeted age-wise proportion of the respondents was as follows: 18-25 years: 25 percent; 26-35 years: 25 percent; 36-45 years: 20 percent; 46-55 years: 14 percent; 56 years and above; 16 percent. Only persons of minimum 18 years of age were interviewed.

For the police personnel, 60 interviews were targeted in each of the sampled city, making it 120 in each of the sampled state. In each of the sampled city, two to three locations were shortlisted in each of the four different regions of the city- North, East, South and West. Priority was given to those locations that were more affected by pandemic. Interviews were also conducted with the police personnel deployed in the market/trading areas and some other public spaces where citizen-police interaction was more likely to occur frequently. Therefore, interviews were conducted at police stations, police *chowkis*, police booths and at various other places where the police personnel were deployed. The locations chosen for the police personnel's interviews were the same as those for civilians. As far as it was possible, the male-female ratio among police respondents was maintained at 80:20; i.e. 80 percent of the total interviews were conducted with male police personnel, while 20 percent interviews were conducted with the female police personnel. Further, as far as feasible, the targeted ratio of 'Constabulary-Rank Officers' to the 'High-Rank Officers' was maintained at 80:20, i.e. 80 percent of the police personnel of constabulary ranks, and 20 percent from the higher ranks were targeted for the interviews.

The detailed sampling plan (targeted and achieved) for the study is shared in Table B and Table C.

Table B | Targeted sample

	Units
Number of cities per state	2
Total number of cities	19 (18 from 9 states; 1 Delhi)
Total number of states/UTs	10
Civilians	
Number of interviews per city	120
Number of interviews per state/UT	240
Total number of civilians' interviews	2,400
Police Personnel	
Number of interviews per city	60
Number of interviews per state/UT	120
Total number of police' interviews	1,200
Gross Total Targeted (Civilians and Police Personnel)	3,600

Table C | Achieved Sample

State/UT	Civilians	Police Personnel
Andhra Pradesh	240	120
Bihar	240	123
Gujarat	240	120
Karnataka	241	120
Kerala	240	120
Maharashtra	244	114
Tamil Nadu	244	120
The NCT of Delhi	241	120
Uttar Pradesh	239	121
West Bengal	240	120
Total No. of Interviews	2,409	1,198
	3,607	

The profile of the respondents is as follows:

Table D | Profile of the respondents

Civilians (%)	
Men	60
Women	40
18-29 years	34
30-39 years	26
40-49 years	20
50-59 years	13
60 years or above	7
Poor	30
Lower class	36

Middle class	25
Rich	9

Hindu Upper Castes	28
Hindu OBCs	30
Hindu Dalits	21
Hindu Adivasis	3
Muslims	11
Christians	2
Others	4

Non-literate	7
Below Primary	4
Primary pass / Middle fail	8
Middle pass / Matric fail	9
Up to Matric	18
Up to Intermediate	20
Graduates or above	35

Tier-I cities	35
Tier-II or III cities	65

Police Personnel (%)	
Men	79
Women	21

18-29 years	21
30-39 years	43
40-49 years	24
50 years or above	12

Constabulary Ranked	77
Higher Ranked	21
Others	2

<5 years of services	17
5-10 years of services	26
More than 10 years of services	57

Tier-I cities	35
Tier-II or III cities	65

Note: All figures are rounded off.

Research instruments

Preparation of the questionnaire: The questionnaires were finalised after discussions with a few police personnel who were on Covid-19 duty, and after taking the relevant

newspaper articles and reports regarding police-people interactions into consideration. The main objective was to study the working conditions of the police personnel and the problems they faced in discharging their duties during Covid-19 pandemic. The suggestions received were incorporated in designing the questionnaires. Most questions in the questionnaire were structured, i.e., close-ended. However, there were some that were kept open-ended in order to find out the respondent's spontaneous feelings about an issue without giving her/him a pre-decided set of options.

Translation: It would not be justifiable to use a single language questionnaire in a multi-lingual country like India. Therefore, translations were done for each state by the regional team which was familiar with the language of each region before administering the questionnaire in field.

Training workshop: A one-day training workshop was organised in each state before the survey fieldwork began in order to train the field investigators (FIs) and supervisors who carry out the fieldwork operations. The trainers conducted an intensive and interactive workshop wherein investigators underwent an orientation programme and were trained rigorously on survey method, interviewing techniques and communication with the respondents. A comprehensive and detailed interviewing guide, designed on the basis of the questionnaire and survey methodology, was prepared for the interviewers. For a better understanding of the questionnaire, mock interviews were also conducted by the FIs. The workshops were conducted strictly following the Covid-19 protocol. In a few states, considering the safety and security of the state coordinators, supervisors, field investigators and other team members, the workshops were conducted online, through platforms like Google Meet, Skype and Zoom.

Fieldwork: The fieldwork of the survey took place from the months of October and November 2020. Field investigators, who were mainly students of social sciences belonging to colleges and universities in different parts of the country, were selected to carry out the field work. They conducted face-to-face interviews with the respondents at the place of work or residence of the respondent using a standardised questionnaire in the language spoken and understood by her/him. The fieldwork was conducted strictly following the Covid-19 protocol.

Data checking and analysis: All questionnaires were manually screened for consistency and quality check. The questionnaire had codes (of pre-coded questions) that were used for data punching. A team was constituted for checking the codes and making corrections if there were any mistakes. The checking and the subsequent data entry

took place at the Lokniti-CSDS office in Delhi. The analyses presented in this report have been done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Methodology for the rapid survey on policing during the lockdown

(Chapter 7)

This was a qualitative dipstick survey. The location of the study was the Delhi-NCR region, Gujarat and Rajasthan. Over 200 respondents were interviewed in September 2020 for the study.

The sample sizes of the two groups interviewed for the surveys are given below:

Migrant Workers' Survey: Sample Size	
State	Number of respondents
Delhi	68
Rajasthan	18
Gujarat	14
Total	100

Aid Workers' Survey: Sample Size	
State	Number of respondents
Delhi	65
Rajasthan	26
Gujarat	23
Total	114

Sampling method: The main objective of the survey was to study the expectations from and performance of the police during the pandemic especially when the nationwide lockdown was in place. Since a strict lockdown was in place, majority of the people were confined to their homes and thus, had limited interaction with the police. To overcome this limitation, the team decided to focus only on the people or group of people who had the most interaction with the police. Therefore, for the survey, respondents were selected by purposive sampling method. The two sets of people who frequently came in contact with the police, identified for the survey were – migrant workers and aid workers. Migrant workers were the worst affected due to the lockdown. In the initial phase of the lockdown, with less money in their pockets and no assurance of work, workers struggled to get enough food. Many of them decided to go back to their home states by any means possible. This was when they came in contact with the police the most. The local authorities of the states surveyed had permitted aid workers to travel and they were actively seen on the roads along with the police. Those migrant workers who had been working in Delhi-NCR, Gujarat or Rajasthan prior to the nationwide lockdown were considered for the survey. In the case of aid workers, workers who partici-

pated in relief work and had worked on the ground during the lockdown in Delhi-NCR, Gujarat or Rajasthan were considered for the study.

Survey method: It was challenging to conduct face-to-face interviews for the rapid survey as most of the migrant workers were either in their home states or on the way to their working states, owing to the lockdown restrictions imposed by the government, making it difficult to conduct interviews in person. Therefore, the team decided to conduct all the interviews via telephone. Also challenging was getting the contact details of aid and migrant workers. For this, Common Cause contacted experienced civil society organisations working in these regions, especially those who were actively assisting people during the lockdown. Organisations shared mobile numbers of their volunteers and migrant workers who came in contact with them during the relief work.

Questionnaire design: Several brainstorming sessions within the team and multiple rounds of discussions with subject experts were held before designing both the questionnaires. The questionnaires were finally designed on the basis of the following four themes:

1. Tasks given to the police
2. Expectations from the police
3. Behaviour of the police
4. Experiences with the police

Considering the demographic of our potential respondents, both the questionnaires were prepared in Hindi. In order to check the efficacy of the questionnaires, a pilot study was conducted. The pilot for the aid workers' questionnaire was conducted in the last week of August and for the migrant workers, it was conducted in the first week of September. Both the questionnaires had well over 30 main questions and multiple sub-questions under them. A face-to-face interview would have taken at least half an hour to complete but as predicted, telephonic interviews took more time. It was also challenging for interviewers to explain some questions over the phone and keep the discussion going. After getting these inputs from the pilot studies, both the questionnaires were redesigned. Some questions were removed and some were modified as per the requirement of the medium. Investigators were given special training to conduct telephonic interviews. For a better understanding of the survey process, they also conducted mock interviews.

Data collection and processing: Interviews of aid workers began from the first week of September 2020 and of the migrant workers in the second week of September 2020. The survey work went on for the next couple of weeks and

was completed by 30 September 2020. In a span of three weeks, a total 214 interviews of aid and migrant workers were conducted. For the ease of handling and processing the data, all the responses were recorded online using a cloud-based survey tool (online software) called Survey-Monkey. All the open-ended questions were coded and the data was later analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

**STATUS OF POLICING IN INDIA REPORT 2020:
POLICING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC/LOCKDOWN
QUESTIONNAIRE-1 POLICE PERSONNEL**

INVESTIGATOR'S INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

My Name is _____ and I am from Lokniti-CSDS: Centre for the Study of the Developing Societies (Please mention your university's name here), a research institute based in Delhi and Common Cause, an NGO in Delhi. We are doing a survey of police across the country, to gather their perspective towards the police system and criminal justice system during Covid-19 pandemic/Lockdown. It covers aspects such as conditions of duty hours, work-stress, obstacles in investigation, etc.

We are interviewing thousands of police personnel across the country. Based on this study, a report on the status of policing in India will be produced.

This survey is an independent study and it is not linked to any political party or government agency.

Whatever information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. The findings of the survey will be used for research work.

Participation in this survey is voluntary and it is entirely up to you answer or not to answer any question that I ask. We hope that you will take part in this survey since your participation is important. It usually takes 20–30 minutes to complete this interview. Please spare some time for the interview and help me in completing this survey.

A1. Did the respondent give consent? (Put a tick and then proceed with interview) ☐

State ID

City ID

Respondent S. No.

Z1. State:

Z2. District:

Z3. City:

Z4. Date of Interview (dd/mm):

Z5. Name of Investigator (Write your Roll No. in the box):

Date

Month

**Investigator
Roll No.**

INTERVIEW BEGINS:

B1. Presently, what is your rank within the police force?

1. Constable 2. Head constable 3. Assistance sub-inspector 4. Sub-inspector
5. Inspector 6. Circle Inspector 7. ASP/Dy. SP 8. Other _____ 9. No response

B1a. Are you in civil police or armed police?

1. Civil Police 2. Armed Police 3. Other _____ 8. No response

B1b. In normal times, in this posting, what is the main task that you usually perform daily? (Record exactly, from codebook) _____ 98. No response

B2. How long have you been in police service? (No. of years) _____ (If less than one year, Code 01)

B3. Where are you currently posted—Police Station, Police Outpost, Cyber Cell, Armed Police Battalion or anywhere else?

1. Police Station 2. Police Outpost 3. Cyber Cell 4. Armed Police Battalion
5. On Covid duty (silent option) 6. Anywhere else _____ 8. No Response

B4. How long have you been at your current place of posting? (Number of years) _____ (If less than one year, Code 01)

B5. Does your family live with you at this posting? 2. Yes 1. No 8. No response

B5a. (If yes) During the Coronavirus outbreak, were you living with a family member who was more vulnerable to contracting Coronavirus- like children, a pregnant woman, an old person, or someone with a prolonged illness? 2. Yes 1. No 8. No response

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☐	Q1.	In your experience, compared to normal times, was the policing during the time of Corona outbreak/lockdown any different or was it the same as before?	1. Different	2. Same as before	8. NR
☐	Q2.	During Coronavirus outbreak, Police adopted many contactless methods to protect its force from the virus. Was any of the following installed in your Police Station?	Yes	No	NR
a. ☐		a. Sensor-based sanitization machine.	2	1	8
b. ☐		b. Thermal cameras.	2	1	8
c. ☐		c. Video-intercom device.	2	1	8
d. ☐		d. UV disinfection box.	2	1	8
☐	Q2e.	How do you rate the cleanliness and hygiene conditions of Police Stations and Police Vehicles during last few months- very good, good, bad, or very bad?	1. Very good	2. Good	3. Bad
			4. Very bad	8. NR	
☐	Q3.	During Corona virus outbreak, in some States, the Police personnel suffering from some illness or the ones who were 55 years or above, were either shifted to low-risk areas or were given a complete rest. Do you know of any police personnel who was shifted to a low-risk area or given complete rest?	2. Yes	1. No	
			3. No such provision implemented here (<i>silent option</i>)	8. NR	
☐	Q3a.	And were the Police personnel allowed leaves if they had any symptoms for Coronavirus, like fever, coughing etc.?	2. Yes	1. No	8. No response
☐	Q4.	To what extent was it possible for you to maintain physical distancing while performing your duties in order to protect you from contacting Coronavirus - to a large extent, to some extent, not much, or not at all?	1. To a large extent	2. To some extent	
			3. Not much	4. Not at all	8. NR
☐	Q5.	During last few months, did the department make any arrangement for regular health-checkups for the Police personnel performing various tasks during Corona outbreak?	2. Yes	1. No	3. Only checked those having fever or other visible symptoms (<i>silent option</i>)
			8. NR		
☐	Q6.	How many such cases of Police personnel getting Coronavirus did this locality encounter - many, a few, hardly any, or no case at all?	1. Many	2. A few	3. Hardly any
			4. No case at all	8. NR	
☐	Q6a.	And how many cases did this locality encounter of the family members of Police personnel getting infected with Coronavirus- many, a few, hardly any, or no case at all?	1. Many	2. A few	3. Hardly any
			4. No case at all	8. NR	
☐	Q7.	Compared to normal times, how much did the Police increase surveillance during the lockdown- a lot, somewhat, a little or was it the same as before?	1. A lot	2. Somewhat	3. A little
			4. Same as before	8. NR	
☐	Q8.	What was the main task assigned to you during the lockdown? (<i>Write exact answer; coding will be done at CSDS Delhi</i>) _____			98. NR
☐	Q9.	During lockdown, thousands of people were stranded at different places and wanted to go home. Were you deployed to facilitate them with any of the following?	Yes	No	NR
a. ☐		a. Facilitating homeward journey of stranded peoples at Bus Terminals/Railway Stations .	2	1	8
b. ☐		b. Facilitating homeward journey of stranded peoples who had to walk on foot.	2	1	8
c. ☐		c. In making the essential food items available to them.	2	1	8
d. ☐		d. Making arrangements for their stay/rest during night.	2	1	8

☐	Q10.	Do you think there were enough rooms for the migrants in the shelters provided for their stay?				
		2. Yes	1. No	8. No Response		
☐	Q10a.	How often did you come across a situation where migrants were trying to enter shelters but police had to resort to using force to stop them, as there was no space for them in the shelters- many times, a few times, rarely or never?				
		1. Many times	2. A few times			
		3. Rarely	4. Never	8. NR		
☐	Q11.	How much did you fear of catching the Coronavirus while on duty during the lockdown- a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?				
		1. A lot	2. Somewhat	3. A little		
		4. Not at all	8. NR			
☐	Q12.	During Corona outbreak, after finishing with your duty hours, did you have to go back to your family every day?				
		2. Yes	1. No	8. No Response		
☐	Q13.	(If yes in Q12) While going back to your family after finishing your duty hours, was it possible for you to practice the following?				
			Yes	No	NR	NA
a. ☐	a.	Washing or sanitizing yourself before entering home.	2	1	8	9
b. ☐	b.	Washing your clothes separately.	2	1	8	9
c. ☐	c.	Maintaining physical distance with all the family members.	2	1	8	9
d. ☐	d.	Staying in complete isolation in a different room.	2	1	8	9
☐	Q14.	In your experience, did the Police in this locality face any of the following while fighting Coronavirus outbreak?				
			Yes	No	NR	
a. ☐	a.	Lack of financial resources .	2	1	8	
b. ☐	b.	Shortage of staff.	2	1	8	
c. ☐	c.	Lack of coordination with police of other regions/districts.	2	1	8	
d. ☐	d.	Confusion regarding who needed to arrange for shelter for stranded migrants.	2	1	8	
☐	Q15.	During Corona outbreak, were you adequately provided with the following while on duty?				
a. ☐	a.	Mask	1. Yes, adequately	2. Not adequately	3. Not provided at all	8. NR
b. ☐	b.	Soap	1. Yes, adequately	2. Not adequately	3. Not provided at all	8. NR
c. ☐	c.	Sanitizer	1. Yes, adequately	2. Not adequately	3. Not provided at all	8. NR
☐	Q16.	Were you provided with some special training in how to deal with the public during Coronavirus outbreak?				
		2. Yes	1. No	8. No Response		
☐	Q16a.	And were the Police personnel deployed in sensitive zones provided with the PPE kits (Personal Protective Equipment)?				
		2. Yes	1. No	8. No Response		
☐	Q17.	During Corona outbreak some States had special arrangement for those Police personnel who were given duties in high-risk zones. Did the government arrange for any of the following in your region?				
			Yes	No	NR	
a. ☐	a.	Special accommodation for the Police personnel, so that they don't have to go back to their families every day.	2	1	8	
b. ☐	b.	Dedicated Corona/COVID Health Centers or 'special wards' in Hospitals for Police.	2	1	8	
c. ☐	c.	Special insurance cover or financial assistance to family, in case of Police personnel dying due to Corona.	2	1	8	
d. ☐	d.	Additional monetary incentives for those deployed in high-risk zones.	2	1	8	

☐	☐	Q18. How many hours did you work daily, when the lockdown was in place? <i>(Code the number of hours)</i> _____ 98. NR
☐	☐	Q18a. And what used to be your daily working hours in normal times, i.e. before the lockdown? <i>(Code the number of hours)</i> _____ 98. NR
☐		Q19. If given a choice, would have taken a leave and stayed at home during Corona outbreak for your own safety? 2. Yes 1. No 8. No Response
☐		Q20. In your experience, how difficult was it for the Police to control the situation, when the countrywide lockdown was suddenly announced - very difficult, somewhat difficult, not much difficult or not at all difficult? 1. Very difficult 2. Somewhat difficult 3. Not much 4. Not at all 8. NR
☐		Q21. At some places, it was very difficult for the Police to control migrants walking towards their homes while lockdown was in place. In your experience, how difficult was it for the Police in this region to control migrants walking towards their homes - very, somewhat, not much or not at all? 1. Very difficult 2. Somewhat difficult 3. Not much 4. Not at all 8. NR
☐		Q21a. And how often did the Police had to resort to the use of force to control the migrants walking towards their homes- very often, a few times, rarely or never? 1. Very often 2. A few times 3. Rarely 4. Never 8. NR
		Q22. During last few months, how many times did you or your team had to take the following measures with the people who violated lockdown rules - many times, a few times, rarely or never?
a.	☐	a. Imposing fine/penalty. Many times A few times Rarely Never NR 1 2 3 4 8
b.	☐	b. Leaving them after giving some minor punishment. 1 2 3 4 8
c.	☐	c. Resort to the use of force. 1 2 3 4 8
d.	☐	d. Detaining/arresting them. 1 2 3 4 8
☐		Q23. How much did the lockdown affect the normal functioning of the Police, like maintaining law and order or investigating crimes etc.- a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all? 1. A lot 2. Somewhat 3. Not much 4. Not at all 8. NR
☐		Q24. Some regions saw a decline in crime rate during lockdown, compared to earlier. What about your region? Did the overall crime rate increase or decrease when lockdown was in place? 1. Increased 2. Decreased 3. No change 8. NR
☐		Q24a. And compared to earlier times, did the number of complaints or FIRs/NCRs registered in your Police Station increase or decrease during the lockdown? 1. Increased 2. Decreased 3. No change 8. NR
☐		Q25. In your experience, to what extent was it possible for the Police to follow the proper legal procedure while maintaining law and order or investigating crimes when the lockdown was in place- completely, to some extent, not much or not at all possible? 1. Completely 2. To some extent 3. Not much 4. Not at all possible 8. NR
☐		Q26. During lockdown, did the general crimes like theft, robbery, kidnapping, murder increase or decrease? 1. Increased 2. Decreased 3. No change 8. NR
☐		Q26a. Since the shops were shut due to lockdown, did the crimes like illegal trade of alcohol or tobacco products increase or decrease? 1. Increased 2. Decreased 3. No change 8. NR
☐		Q26b. And what about the incidents related to Cyber-crimes? Did it show an increase or decrease? 1. Increased 2. Decreased 3. No change 8. NR
☐		Q26c. During lockdown, did the incidences of domestic violence against women increase or decrease in this locality? 1. Increased 2. Decreased 3. No change 8. NR

☐	Q27.	According to you, how much did Police make use of social media platforms, like Facebook and WhatsApp etc., to share relevant information regarding Corona virus and lockdown with the people- a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?	1. A lot	2. Somewhat	3. Not much	4. Not at all	8. NR
☐	Q28.	In some localities people were very supportive and properly followed all the rules and regulations during lockdown, while in some others they were not supportive at all. What about your region? How supportive were the people in the following localities -Very, somewhat, not much, or not at all?	Very	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all	NR
a. ☐		a. Poor localities, like slums or jhuggis.	1	2	3	4	8
b. ☐		b. Middle class localities, like flats or gated colonies.	1	2	3	4	8
c. ☐		c. Rich localities, like independent bungalows.	1	2	3	4	8
☐	Q29.	When lockdown was in place, did you come across any incident of a confrontation between local people and the Police.			Yes	No	NR
a. ☐		a. ...at local shops selling essential food items.			2	1	8
b. ☐		b. ...during food distribution.			2	1	8
c. ☐		c. ...while checking travel passes.			2	1	8
d. ☐		d. ...in a contagious zone.			2	1	8
e. ☐		e. ...in any other situation. <i>(Specify)</i> _____			2	1	8
☐	Q30.	In your experience of last few months, how much do you think the Police is capable in handling such pandemic situations - a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?	1. A lot	2. Somewhat	3. Not much	4. Not at all	8. NR
☐	Q31.	According to you, what was the biggest hurdle/difficulty for the Police while handling Coronavirus pandemic during Lockdown? (Write exact answer; coding will be done at CSDS Delhi)					98. NR
☐	Q32.	Do you think compared to the poor, the rich people got away easily, or were the prohibitions the same for everyone?	2. Yes, rich got away easily				
			1. No, they were same for everyone				8. NR
☐	Q33.	In many government offices, the employees were asked to compulsorily download the 'Arogya Setu App' in their phones. Were you and your colleagues made to download this app?	2. Yes 1. No 3. Haven't heard about this app (Silent option)				8. NR
☐	Q34.	Did the 'Arogya Setu App' help Police in any of the following?.	Yes	No	NR		
a. ☐		a. Tracing people with Coronavirus symptoms .	2	1	8		
b. ☐		b. Identifying containment zones or high-risk zones.	2	1	8		
☐	Q35.	How much do you think being on regular duty during Coronavirus outbreak have impacted the mental health of the Police personnel like you- a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?	1. A lot	2. Somewhat	3. Not much	4. Not at all	8. NR
☐	Q36.	According to you, during Corona outbreak, was the media coverage of State Police positive or negative?	1. Positive		2. Negative		8. NR

		Support	Oppose	NR
	Q37. Do you support or oppose the following?			
a.	a. Decongesting prisons by setting minor offenders or Under-Trials free or releasing them on bail to contain the spread of Coronavirus.	1	2	8
b.	b. Arresting protestors and activists during lockdown, who were active before.	1	2	8
c.	c. Arresting people for lockdown violation.	1	2	8
	Q38. Now when the unlock process is going on, according to you, what is the biggest challenge faced by the Police while performing daily duties? <i>(Record exactly, coding will be done at CSDS Delhi)</i>	_____ 98. NR		
BACKGROUND DATA				
Personal Information				
	B6. What is your age? <i>(in completed years)</i> _____ 98. No Response <i>(Code 95 for 95 yrs & above)</i>			
	B7. Gender: 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other			
	B8. Up to what level have you studied? <i>(Record exactly and consult code book)</i>	_____ 9. No response		
	B9. And what is your caste group? 1. Scheduled Caste (SC) 2. Scheduled Tribe (ST) 3. Other Backward Classes (OBC) 4. Other			
	B9a. What is your Caste/Jati-biradari/Tribe name? <i>(Consult code book for code)</i>	_____		
	B10. What is your religion? 1. Hindu 2. Muslim 3. Christian 4. Sikh 5. Buddhist/Neo Buddhist 6. Jain 7. Parsi 8. No religion 9. Others <i>(Specify)</i> _____			
	B11. Are you married? 1. Married 2. Married (No Gauna/not started living together) 3. Widowed 4. Divorced 5. Separated 6. Deserted 7. Unmarried/Single 8. Live with partner but not married 9. NR			
	B12. What kind of mobile phone do you have- a simple phone or a smart phone with a touch screen? 1. Simple phone 2. Smart phone 3. Do not have a phone 8. NR			
	B12a. <i>(If respondent has a mobile phone)</i> Does you phone have an internet connection? 2. Yes 1. No 8. NR 9. NA			
	B13. At your home, what language do you speak in the most while conversing with your family members? <i>(Note down answer and consult codebook for codes)</i> _____ 98. NR			
Adults	B14. Total no. of family members living in the household?			
Children	Adults _____ Children _____ <i>(If more than 9, code 9)</i>			
	B15. Do you suffer from any of the following?	Yes	No	NR
a.	a. Chronic Respiratory Disease or Lung disease.	2	1	8
b.	b. Cardiovascular or Heart disease.	2	1	8
c.	c. Hypertension (High Blood Pressure).	2	1	8
d.	d. Diabetes.	2	1	8
e.	e. Any other chronic disease <i>(Specify)</i> _____.	2	1	8

☐ **B16.** How many rooms did you have in the house/accommodation where you were staying during Coronavirus outbreak/lockdown?

1. One	2. Two	3. Three
4. Four	5. Five	6. Six or more

B17. Do you or members of your household have the following things? **Yes** **No**

a.	☐	a. Car/Jeep/Van	2	1
b.	☐	b. Scooter/Motorcycle/Moped	2	1
c.	☐	c. Airconditioner	2	1
d.	☐	d. Computer/laptop/i-Pad	2	1
e.	☐	e. Washing machine	2	1
f.	☐	f. Fridge	2	1
g.	☐	g. Television	2	1
h.	☐	h. Bank/Post office account	2	1
i.	☐	i. ATM/Debit/Credit card	2	1
j.	☐	j. LPG gas	2	1
j.	☐	k. Toilet inside the house	2	1

☐ **B18.** Total monthly household income - putting together the income of all members of the household?

01. 10000 to 20000	02. 20001 to 30000	03. 30001 to 40000	04. 40001 to 50000
05. 50001 to 60000	06. 60001 to 70000	07. 70001 to 80000	08. 80001 to 90000
09. 90001 to 100000	10. 100001 and above	98. No response	

B19. Mobile/ Telephone number of the respondent? **Mobile** _____

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**STATUS OF POLICING IN INDIA REPORT 2020:
POLICING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC/LOCKDOWN
QUESTIONNAIRE - II CIVILIANS**

INVESTIGATOR'S INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

My name is _____ and I have come on behalf of Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (also give your university's reference), a social science research organization and Common Cause, an NGO in Delhi. We are conducting a survey on people's perception and experience of dealing with the police during Covid-19 pandemic/Lockdown. Every person over the age of 18 has an equal chance of being included in this study. You have been selected by chance. There is no risk and also no benefit in participating in this survey and your participation is voluntary. This survey is an independent study and is not linked to any political party or government agency. Your identity and the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. We hope that you will take part in this survey since your participation is important. It usually takes 20 to 30 minutes to complete this interview. Please spare some time for the interview and help me in successfully completing the survey.

A1. Did the respondent give consent? *(Put a tick and then proceed with interview)* ☐

State ID

--	--

City ID

--	--

Respondent S. No.

--	--	--

Z1. State: _____

Z1b. District: _____

Z1a. City: _____

Z2. Name of the Respondent: _____

Z3. Address of the respondent *(Give landmark)*: _____

Date

--	--

Month

--	--

**Investigator
Roll No.**

--	--

Z4: Date of Interview *(dd/mm)*: _____

Z5: Name of Investigator *(Write your Roll No. in the box)*: _____

INTERVIEW BEGINS:

B1. What is your age? *(in completed years)* _____ 98. No Response *(Code 95 for 95 yrs & above)*

B2. Gender: 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other

B3. Up to what level have you studied? *(Record exactly and consult code book)*

_____ 9. No response

Q1. In last few months, many people got infected with Coronavirus. How many people got infected in your locality - many, a few, hardly any, or no one? 1. Many 2. A few 3. Hardly any

4. No one 8. No response

Q2. Have you come across anyone who contracted coronavirus? 2. Yes 1. No 8. NR

Q3. In many regions, local people found it difficult to get access to basic essentials like food or medicines, during lockdown. How difficult was it for you and your family to get access to the basic essentials - very, somewhat, not much, or not at all?

1. Very 2. Somewhat 3. Not much 4. Not at all 8. NR

Q4. According to you, when the lockdown was in place, did the presence of Police increase or decrease in your locality? 1. Increased 2. Decreased 3. Same as before *(silent option)* 8. NR

Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), 29 Rajpur Road, Delhi- 54. Ph: (011) 23942199

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☐	Q5.	During lockdown, many Police personnel were deployed in various public places. Did their presence make you feel secure or did you feel threatened by their presence?	1. Felt secure 2. Felt threatened 3. No impact at all (Silent option) 8. NR					
☐	Q6.	Compared to normal times, was your experience with the Police during the time of Corona outbreak/lockdown any different or was it the same as before?	1. Different 2. Same as before 8. NR					
☐	Q6a.	(If 'different') In what aspect did you find it different compared to the normal times? (Record answer, coding will be done at CSDS Delhi) _____	98. NR					
☐	Q7.	During Corona outbreak/lockdown, Police instructed general public to follow various rules and regulations. How did you see all those messages and instructions given by the Police? Did you see them as a threat warning to scare you or did you look at that as an act of care/protection?	1. As a threat 2. An act of care/protection 8. No response					
☐	Q8.	How often did it happen with you or your family members that you/they went out for the following purposes but the Police stopped you/them and forced to return - always, many times, a few times, rarely or never?	Always	Many times	A few times	Rarely	Never	NR
a. ☐	a.	To buy some essential food or medicines	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. ☐	b.	To your workplace/Office	1	2	3	4	5	8
☐	Q9.	During lockdown, whenever you went out of your home to buy essentials or for work, how much did you fear of the following - a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?	A lot Somewhat Not much Not at all NR					
a. ☐	a.	Fear of Police imposing fine/penalty or confiscating your vehicle	1	2	3	4	8	
b. ☐	b.	Fear of Police beating you	1	2	3	4	8	
c. ☐	c.	Fear of Police taking you to a hospital for corona testing	1	2	3	4	8	
d. ☐	d.	Fear of Police detaining/arresting you	1	2	3	4	8	
☐	Q10.	When the lockdown was in place, did you visit a Police Station or contact Police via phone?	2. Yes 1. No 8. NR					
☐	Q10a.	(If yes) What was the reason for contacting the Police? (Record exact answer; Code from the Codebook) _____	98. NR 99. Not applicable (NA)					
☐	Q10b.	(If yes) Were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the help provided by the Police?	1. Satisfied 2. Dissatisfied 8. NR 9. NA					
☐	Q11.	When lockdown was in place, did you also encounter a situation where you needed to seek the help of Police but you avoided that?	2. Yes 1. No 8. NR					
☐	Q11a.	(If yes) What kind of help did you want from the Police? (Record exact answer; Code from the Codebook) _____	98. NR 99. Not applicable (NA)					
☐	Q11b.	(If yes) And what was the reason for avoiding contacting Police? (Record exact answer; Code from the Codebook) _____	98. NR 99. Not applicable (NA)					
☐	Q12.	According to you, how much did the lockdown affect the normal functioning of the Police, like maintaining law and order or investigating crimes etc.- a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?	1. A lot 2. Somewhat 3. Not much 4. Not at all 8. NR					
☐	Q13.	Do you have anyone in your family, relatives or friends, working with State Police?	2. Yes 1. No 8. NR					
☐	Q13a.	(If yes) The State came across many cases of police personnel getting infected of Coronavirus. Did any police personnel in your family, relatives or friends get infected?	2. Yes 1. No 3. Not sure 8. NR 9. NA					

☐	Q13b. (If yes in Q13a) How helpful was the Police department in providing essential medical care to him/her- very, somewhat, not much or not at all?	1. Very	2. Somewhat	3. Not much	4. Not at all	8. NR	9. NA	
☐	Q14. During Corona outbreak, how often did you encounter Police personnel following proper safety measures while dealing with public- always, many times, a few times, rarely or never?	1. Always	2. Many times	3. A few times	4. Rarely	5. Never	8. NR	
☐	Q15. During lockdown, which medium did the State Police use the most to communicate necessary information to the local people here? (Write exact answer; Code from the Codebook)						97. Did not use any medium 98. NR	
☐	Q16. In many States, Police planned various 'awareness campaigns' in order to make citizens aware about Corona virus. Did you witness State Police doing such campaign in this locality?	2. Yes		1. No		8. NR		
☐	Q17. How often did you receive relevant information regarding Coronavirus and lockdown on social media platforms, like Facebook and WhatsApp etc., by State Police - very often, a few times, rarely or never?	1. Very often	2. A few times	3. Rarely	4. Never	8. NR 9. NA/Not a Social Media user		
☐	Q18. During lockdown, at some places Police was very well-behaved while at some other places Police misbehaved with the common people. Considering this locality, how do you rate the behavior of the Police during lockdown- very good, good, bad or very bad?	1. Very good	2. Good	3. Bad	4. Very bad	8. NR		
☐	Q19. Do you know of any police personnel living in this locality or deployed here getting infected by Coronavirus?	2. Yes		1. No		8. NR		
☐	Q19a. (If yes) How much did people living here fear of contracting virus because of him/her- a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?	1. A lot	2. Somewhat	3. Not much	4. Not at all	8. NR	9. NA	
☐	Q20. When lockdown was in place, did you witness any of the following?	Yes	No	NR				
a. ☐	a. Police speaking in a rude language with people.	2	1	8				
b. ☐	b. Use of force on people by Police.	2	1	8				
c. ☐	c. Police providing help to people in need.	2	1	8				
☐	Q21. Now, speaking broadly about the rules and regulations imposed during lockdown, did you find them reasonable or unreasonable?	1. Reasonable	2. Unreasonable	8. NR				
☐	Q21a. (If unreasonable) Only police had to take the blame for enforcing such unreasonable rules. Do you agree or disagree?	1. Agree	2. Disagree	8. NR	9. NA			
☐	Q22. In your experience, when lockdown was in place, did the Police discriminate between the following groups of people or did it treat them in the same manner? (If 'discriminated', ask 'whom did the Police favor more')							
a. ☐	a. Rich and Poor	1. Favoured rich	2. Favoured Poor	3. Same treatment	8. NR			
b. ☐	b. Local people and Migrants	1. Favoured local people	2. Favoured Migrants	3. Same treatment	8. NR			
☐	Q23. How often did you have to show your Id card/ e-pass to the Police while travelling during lockdown- always, many times, a few times, rarely or never?-	1. Always	2. Many times	3. A few times	4. Rarely			
		5. Never	8. NR	9. NA/Did not travel				
☐	Q24. While lockdown was in place, did you need to go out to work due to financial difficulty?	2. Yes		1. No		8. NR		

	Q25.	During lockdown, thousands of people were stranded at different places and wanted to go home. Did you witness any Police personnel facilitating them with any of the following?						
			Yes	No	NR			
a.	☐	a. Facilitating homeward journey of stranded peoples at Bus terminals or Railway Stations.	2	1	8			
b.	☐	b. Facilitating homeward journey of stranded peoples who had to walk on foot.	2	1	8			
c.	☐	c. In making the essential food items available to them.	2	1	8			
d.	☐	d. Making arrangements for their stay/rest during night.	2	1	8			
	☐	Q26. I will read out two statements, tell me which of the two you agree more with?						
		Statement I: "Had the government given some time before enforcing lockdown, the issue of migrants stranded at different locations would not have arisen."						
		Statement II: "If the government had given some time before enforcing lockdown, the basic purpose behind lockdown would have been defeated."						
		1. Agree with Statement I	2. Agree with Statement II	8. NR				
	☐	Q27. While some feel that during lockdown, the RWAs acted within their limits, while there are some others who think they went outside their limited authority and were trying to needlessly police the residents. In your experience, did the RWA of your locality function within its limit, or did they try to needlessly police the residents?						
		1. Acted within its limits	2. Tried to needlessly police the residents	8. NR				
	☐	Q28. During Corona outbreak/lockdown, how common were the following incidents in your locality - very, somewhat, not much or not at all?	Very	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all	NR	
a.	☐	a. Confrontation/Argument between Police and the residents.	1	2	3	4	8	
b.	☐	b. Confrontation/Argument between RWA (Resident Welfare Association) members and the residents.	1	2	3	4	8	
c.	☐	c. Misbehavior with Doctors/Nurses by neighbors or landlords.	1	2	3	4	8	
d.	☐	d. Forceful evacuation of tenants by landlords.	1	2	3	4	8	
	☐	Q29. In your opinion, how efficient was the State Police in controlling the Coronavirus outbreak in your City - very, somewhat, not much or not at all?						
		1. Very	2. Somewhat	3. Not much	4. Not at all	8. NR		
	☐	Q30. Now I will read out two statements, tell me which of the two you agree more with?						
		Statement I: "When the lockdown was declared by the Govt, despite a short notice, Police managed to control the situation really well".						
		Statement II: "Sudden declaration of lockdown made it very difficult for the Police to control the situation."						
		1. Agree with Statement I	2. Agree with Statement II	8. NR				
	☐	Q31. According to you, to what extent did the people living in this locality followed the rules and regulations imposed during lockdown- completely, to a large extent, to some extent, not much, or not at all?	1. Completely	2. To a large extent	3. To some extent	4. Not much	5. Not at all	8. NR
	☐	Q32. When lockdown was in place, did you come across any incident of a confrontation between local people and the Police.	Yes	No	NR			
a.	☐	a. ...at local shops selling essential food items.	2	1	8			
b.	☐	b. ...during food distribution.	2	1	8			
c.	☐	c. ...while checking travel passes.	2	1	8			
d.	☐	d. ...in a contagious zone.	2	1	8			
e.	☐	e. ...in any other situation. (Specify) _____	2	1	8			

- ☐ Q33. How often did you come across a situation where the Police used some kind of force, like hitting with a *danda (stick)*, in order to make people follow the rules during lockdown- very often, sometimes, rarely or never? 1. Very often 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 8. NR
- ☐ Q34. In your experience of last few months, how capable is our Police in handling the pandemic situations like Corona - a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?
1. A lot 2. Somewhat 3. Not much 4. Not at all 8. NR
- ☐ ☐ Q35. According to you, what was the biggest hurdle/difficulty for Police while handling Corona pandemic? **(Record exact answer; coding will be done at CSDS Delhi)**
_____ 98. NR
- ☐ Q36. When lockdown was in place, do you think it was easy for some people to get away with the restrictions and prohibitions imposed, or were the restrictions same for everyone?
1. Yes, it was easier for some people 2. No, it was same for everyone 8. NR
- ☐ Q37. Considering how they performed during the Corona outbreak, has your trust in State Police increased or decreased?
1. Increased 2. Decreased
3. Same as before / No change 8. NR
- ☐ Q38. Did you download the 'Arogya Setu App' in your phone?
2. Yes 1. No 3. Don't have a Smartphone
4. Haven't heard about it 8. NR
- ☐ Q38a. **(If yes)** Did you download it on your own, or were you asked to download it mandatorily by your employer or police or someone else? 1. On my own 2. Asked by employer 3. Asked by Police
4. Asked by someone else **(Specify)** _____ 8. NR 9. NA
- ☐ Q39. According to you, how efficient was the 'Arogya Setu App' in tracing the Coronavirus cases- very, somewhat, not much or not at all? 1. Very 2. Somewhat 3. Not much
4. Not at all 5. Haven't heard about it 8. NR
- ☐ Q40. After Coronavirus/Lockdown, in your mind, has the image of the police improved, deteriorated or remained the same?
1. Improved 2. Deteriorated
3. Remained the same 8. NR
- ☐ ☐ Q41. If you have to name just one task/duty in which Police did really well during Corona outbreak, what would that be? **(Write exact answer; Code from the Codebook)**
_____ 98. NR
- ☐ ☐ Q41a. And according to you, what would be that one task/duty in which Police failed completely? **(Write exact answer; Code from the Codebook)** _____ 98. NR
- ☐ ☐ Q42. According to you, what is the single most important step that the Police should take in order to deal with pandemics like Coronavirus in a more efficient manner in the future? **(Write exact answer; Code from the Codebook)** _____ 98. NR

BACKGROUND DATA

Personal Information

B5. How regularly do you do the following – daily, sometimes, rarely or never?

		Daily	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	NR
a.	a. Watch television?	1	2	3	4	8
b.	b. Read the newspaper/s?	1	2	3	4	8
c.	c. Listen to radio?	1	2	3	4	8
d.	d. Use internet?	1	2	3	4	8

B6. How often do you use the following - many times a day, once or twice a day, some days a week, some days a month, very rarely or never?

		Many times a day	Once or twice a day	Some days a week	Some days a month	Very rarely	Never	No account	NR
a.	a. Facebook	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
b.	b. Twitter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
c.	c. WhatsApp	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
d.	d. Instagram	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
e.	e. Youtube	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
f.	f. Tik Tok (Before ban)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
g.	g. Public app	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

B7. What is your main occupation? (*Record & consult codebook. If retired, find out previous job. If student/house wife, note down. If farmer, ask land size owned/cultivated*)

_____ 98. NR

B7a. Are you the main earner of your household? 2. Yes 1. No

B7b. (*If No in B7a*) What is the occupation of the main earner of your household? (*Record exactly and consult codebook*) _____ 98. NR 99. NA

B8. Are you married? 1. Married 2. Married (No Gauna/not started living together)
3. Widowed 4. Divorced 5. Separated 6. Deserted
7. Unmarried/Single 8. Live with partner but not married 9. NR

B9. What is your Caste/Jati-biradari/Tribe name? (*Consult code book for code*)

B9a. And what is your caste group? 1. Scheduled Caste (SC) 2. Scheduled Tribe (ST)
3. Other Backward Classes (OBC) 4. Other

B10. What is your religion? 1. Hindu 2. Muslim 3. Christian 4. Sikh 5. Buddhist/Neo Buddhist
6. Jain 7. Parsi 8. No religion 9. Others (*Specify*) _____

B11. What kind of mobile phone do you have – a normal phone or a smart phone with a touch screen? 1. Normal phone 2. Smart phone 3. Don't have a phone 8. No answer

B11a. (*If respondent has a mobile phone*) Does your phone have an internet connection?
2. Yes 1. No 8. NR 9. NA

B12. Do you have an Aadhar card? 2. Yes 1. No 8. NR

		B13.	Type of house where the respondent lives														
			1. House/Flat/Bungalow	2. House/Flat with 5 or more rooms													
			3. House/Flat with 4 rooms	4. Houses/Flat with 3 rooms		5. Houses/Flat with 2 rooms											
			6. House with 1 room	7. Mainly Kutch house		8. Slum/Jhuggi Jhopri											
			9. NA.														
Adults	Children	B14.	A Total no. of family members living in the household?														
			Adults _____ Children _____ (If more than 9, code 9)														
		B15.	Do you or members of your household have the following things?	Yes	No												
a.			a. Car/Jeep/Van	2	1												
b.			b. Scooter/Motorcycle/Moped	2	1												
c.			c. Airconditioner	2	1												
d.			d. Computer/laptop/i-Pad	2	1												
e.			e. Electronic Fan/Cooler	2	1												
f.			f. Washing machine	2	1												
g.			g. Fridge	2	1												
h.			h. Television	2	1												
i.			i. Bank/Post office account	2	1												
j.			j. ATM/Debit/Credit card	2	1												
k.			k. LPG gas	2	1												
l.			l. Toilet inside the house	2	1												
m.			m. Motorised Pumping set	2	1												
n.			n. Tractor	2	1												
o.			o. Handpump inside the house	2	1												
		B16.	Total monthly household income - putting together the income of all members of the household?														
			01. Less than 1000	02. 1001 to 2000	03. 2001 to 3000	04. 3001 to 5000											
			05. 5001 to 7500	06. 7501 to 10000	07. 10001 to 15000	08. 15001 to 20000											
			09. 20001 to 30000	10. 30001 to 50000	11. 50001 and above	98. No response											
		B17.	Mobile/ Telephone number of the respondent? Mobile _____														
			<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </table>														

**Police Response to the Pandemic:
A Rapid Survey of Migrant and Aid Workers Study by Common Cause**

MIGRANT WORKERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Namaste. I got your number from _____ (person's name), working with _____ (name of organisation). My name is _____ and I work with a Delhi-based NGO, Common Cause. We are conducting a study in three states – Delhi, Gujarat and Rajasthan. Through this study, we want to understand the role of police during the lockdown, the expectations of people from the police, the interactions between people and police and the problems faced by the police themselves. We would like to ask a few questions about your experience with the police during the lockdown.

This is an independent research and has no connections with any party or government. Any information you provide will be analysed without divulging your name and your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

This interview will take about 20 to 30 minutes. If I have your consent, can I start the interview?

1. State ID

1. Gujarat
2. Rajasthan
3. Delhi-NCR

2. Contact Information

Name

Phone Number (Note down beforehand)

3. Gender

1. Female
2. Male
3. Others

4. Age

5. Which district and state does your village fall in?

Note District.....

Note State

6. Which city or district do you work in?

Note City/District

Note State

7. What do you do for a living?

In Delhi-NCR/Gujarat/ Rajasthan

In your home state/village?

8. What is your average monthly income?

9. Which religion/caste or tribe do you belong to? (Don't note if respondent is apprehensive)

10. During the lockdown, how frequently did you or people in your vicinity, like family members or friends etc. ___ contact the police?

1. Many times.....
2. Sometimes.....
3. Rarely.....
4. Never.....
- Comments

11. You said that you had contact with the police during the lockdown. Aside from the police, when you were in Delhi-NCR/ Rajasthan/Gujarat during the lockdown, did you have any contact with the following officials or agencies.

	Many times	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Government doctor or health worker	☐	☐	☐	☐
High-level officers like collector/s, DM, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ration officials	☐	☐	☐	☐
NGO workers/ volunteers	☐	☐	☐	☐

Any others (Please specify)

12. You could have had several kinds of experiences with the police personnel you encountered during the lockdown. Did you, your family members or people you know face any of the following during the lockdown?

	Many times	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Arrest by police	☐	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) for what reason and for how long _____			
Physical assault by police	☐	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) for what reason and what was the nature of the torture _____			
Punishment by police such as fines, sit-ups, etc..	☐	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) for what reason and what was the fine/penalty _____			
Police asked for a bribe	☐	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) for what reason and how much _____			

13. Were the police personnel whom you encountered during the lockdown following the lockdown norms—

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Wearing masks	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wearing gloves	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maintaining social distancing	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments

14. Now I will read out two statements. Which of the following statements do you agree with the most:

I If people had been informed of the lockdown beforehand, they would have faced lesser difficulties.

II The lockdown happened at an appropriate time, before or later would not have made a difference

1. Agree with the 1st statement.....
2. Agree with the 2nd statement.....

3. Disagree with both the statements

Comments

15. During the lockdown, did you get ration or cooked food?

1. Many times

2. Sometimes

3. Rarely

4. Never

Comments

16. If yes, who provided you this service? (Can select multiple responses)

a. Police

b. Government official

c. NGO or volunteer

d. Religious organisation

e. Had to purchase.

f. Any others (Please specify)

17. In your experience, during the lockdown, how frequently did the police use force against the common people—

1. Many times

2. Sometimes

3. Rarely

4. Never

Comments

18. During the lockdown, the government had announced several helpline numbers, such as helplines for financial assistance to people, for coronavirus or health information, for migrant workers, etc. Did you try to call on any such helpline numbers?

1. Yes

2. No

3. Tried but the call didn't connect

Comments

19. If yes, which helpline number did you call?

Please specify.....

20. Did you get any assistance from the helpline number that you called?

1. Received full assistance

2. Received some assistance

3. Received very little assistance

4. Received no assistance at all

Comments

21. During the lockdown, the government had announced several helpline numbers, such as helplines for financial assistance to people, for coronavirus or health information, for migrant workers, etc. Did you try to call on any such helpline numbers?

1. Yes

2. No

3. Tried but the call didn't connect

Comments

22. If yes, which helpline number did you call?

Please specify.....

23. Did you get any assistance from the helpline number that you called?

1. Received full assistance
2. Received some assistance
3. Received very little assistance
4. Received no assistance at all

Comments

24. Did you go back to your village or home state after the announcement of the lockdown on 24th March 2020?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Tried but couldn't go back

Comments

25. When did you go back? (Note date/rough period)

26. Who did you travel with? (Can select multiple options)

1. Alone
2. With spouse
3. With Family - Parents/Children
4. With Friends/Acquaintances from the same village
5. Others (Please specify)

27. Which mode of transportation did you use to go back to your village/ home state? (Can select multiple options)

1. Railways
2. Government Bus
3. Private Vehicle/Bus/Tempo/Truck
4. On foot
5. Motorcycle
6. Bicycle
7. Multiple modes (Please specify)

28. Did any government employee/official try to help you or the people you were travelling with during the journey back to your village during the lockdown?

1. Many times
2. Sometimes
3. Rarely
4. Never

If yes, which government employee/official?

29. How much did you have to spend to travel back to your home state or village?

- Per person _____
- Overall cost _____

30. What was the reason for going back to your village or home state?

	Very much	Somewhat	Not so much	Not at all
Fear of getting infected with coronavirus	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lost your job/stopped getting work	☐	☐	☐	☐
You were getting money, but you didn't need to go for work/ to office	☐	☐	☐	☐
Worry for your family/needed to look after your family	☐	☐	☐	☐

What was the biggest reason for going back to your home state or village?.....

31. Did you have any contact with the police during your journey back to your home state/ village?

- Many times
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Comments

32. It was reported that people faced many difficulties while going back to their home states or villages. Did you, or your fellow travellers, have to face any of the below situations?

	Yes	No	Don't know/ no response
Arrest by police	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) for what reason and for how long _____		
Physical assault by police	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) for what reason and what was the nature of the torture _____		
Punishment by police such as fines, sit-ups, etc.	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) for what reason and what was the fine/penalty _____		
Spraying disinfectant/medicines over the passengers	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) when was this done and by whom ____		
Police asked for a bribe	☐	☐	☐
	(If yes) for what reason and how much ____		

33. Did you have to pay a bribe to an agent or some other person while going back to your home state/ village?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/ No response

Comments

34. If yes, was the police also involved in this?

1. Police was fully involved
2. Police was somewhat involved
3. Police was hardly involved
4. Police was not at all involved

Comments

35. Did you or anyone you were traveling with have to return back mid-journey on the orders of the police or any other government official/s?

1. Yes, I/my family had to return
2. Yes, someone travelling with me had to return
3. Other people had to return
4. No

36. What was the reason given to you/them to return?

1. The officials of the state or district where they were going did not allow anyone to enter
2. I/they did not have an e-pass
3. Any other reason (Please specify)

37. Who arranged for your/their return, such as arranging vehicle, bus, train, etc.?

1. You/they paid with their own money
2. Government officials
3. Had to walk back
4. Any other organisation/s or individual/s

Comments

38. When you were on your way back to your home state/ village, which organisation provided you with food and water? (Can select multiple responses)

1. Police
2. Government Officials
3. Other civil society/voluntary organisations or individuals
4. Any other religious organisation
5. Had to buy it
6. Did not get food/water
7. Cooked and carried own food
8. Others (Please specify)

39. Which organisation assisted you in getting a place to sleep or rest at night? (Can select multiple responses)

1. Police
2. Government Officials
3. Any other civil society/voluntary organisation or individual
4. Any other religious organisation
5. Had to pay for this facility
6. Facility not available
7. Did not need this facility
8. Others (Please specify)

40. Which organisation ensured access to toilets and bathrooms during your journey? (Can select multiple responses)

1. Police
2. Government Officials
3. Any other civil society/voluntary organisation or individual
4. Any other religious organisation
5. Had to pay for this facility
6. Facility not available
7. Did not need it
8. Others (Please specify)

41. Which organisation provided you with medical assistance or check-ups during your journey? (Can select multiple responses)

1. Police
2. Government Officials
3. Any other civil society/voluntary organisation or individual
4. Any other religious organisation
5. Had to pay for this facility
6. Facility not available
7. Did not need it
8. Others (Please specify)

42. Did you or any of your fellow travellers have to undergo the following during the journey?

	Yes	No	Don't know/ no response
Temperature check	☐	☐	☐
Enquiries about cough/cold	☐	☐	☐
Covid-19 test	☐	☐	☐

Comments

43. If someone was found positive for coronavirus, what happened to them?

44. Which organisation played the most important role in helping you or your fellow travellers during the journey back to your home state/village?

45. When, during the lockdown, did you face the most difficulty?

1. While in Gujarat/Rajasthan/Delhi-NCR
2. During the journey back to the home state/village
3. After reaching the home state/village

46. How satisfied are you with the behavior of police that you encountered during the lockdown?

1. Very satisfied
2. Somewhat satisfied
3. Somewhat dissatisfied
4. Very dissatisfied

47. In your experience:

	In rural areas	In urban areas	Don't know/ No response
a. Where was the police stricter during the lockdown?	☐	☐	☐
b. Where did people get more facilities during the lockdown?	☐	☐	☐

Comments.....

48. Now I will read out two statements. Please tell me which statement you agree with more:

I. Police was doing its job well during the lockdown and a little bit of strictness was required for the safety of the people.

II. The strictness with which the police enforced the rules during the lockdown was harsh/inappropriate.

1. Agree with the 1st statement
2. Agree with the 2nd statement
3. Disagree with both the statements
4. Don't know/ No response

Comments

49. Did you come across any instance/s during the lockdown where the police went out of its way to help people or treated the people well? If yes, please elaborate a little bit about it. _____

50. And, during the lockdown, did you or your acquaintances encounter any situations in which the police was unduly strict or brutal with the people? If yes, please elaborate a little bit about it. _____

51. General Comments_____

Police Response to the Pandemic: A Rapid Survey of Migrant and Aid Workers Study by Common Cause

AID WORKERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Namaste. I got your number from _____ (person's name), working with _____ (name of organisation). My name is _____ and I work with a Delhi-based NGO, Common Cause. Common Cause is a non-governmental organisation that uses various means to champion public causes and issues. We make interventions on behalf of the common people through public interest litigations, advocacy and research initiatives, to name a few. Our PILs pertain to significant constitutional issues like 2G case, coal block case, sedition case, etc.

We have also published two national-level studies on policing in India, called the Status of Policing in India Reports. The present report seeks to know the role of the police during the lockdown. This study is being conducted in three states - Delhi, Gujarat and Rajasthan. Through this study, we want to understand the role of police during the lockdown, the expectations of people from the police, the interactions between people and police and the problems faced by the police themselves. As you were on field, providing assistance to the people in need during lockdown, your experiences with the police is valuable for the study. We would like to ask a few questions about your experience with the police during the lockdown.

This is an independent research and has no connection with any party or government. Any information you provide will be processed without divulging your name and your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

This interview will take 20 to 30 minutes. If I have your consent, can I start the interview?

1. State ID

- a. Gujarat
- b. Rajasthan
- c. Delhi-NCR
- d. Others (Please specify)

2. Contact Information

Name

E-mail

Phone Number (Note down beforehand)

3. Which organisation are you associated with/ do you work with?

4. Where were you working during lockdown?

City

District

Location

5. During the lockdown, what kind of help/relief were you providing to the people? (Can select multiple responses)

- 1. Providing food/water/ration to the people
- 2. Providing shelter to the people
- 3. Helping migrant workers to travel to their home states/villages
- 4. Providing financial aid to the people
- 5. Others (Please specify)

6. How frequently did you have contact with the police in the course of your work during the lockdown?

1. Very frequently
2. Somewhat frequently
3. Rarely
4. Never

7. It was reported that NGOs and volunteers faced a lot of problems while trying to help common people during the lockdown. What about you, did you or your colleagues face the following difficulties while providing relief work during the lockdown? Rate the problem on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means that you did not face this problem at all and 5 means that you faced this problem a lot:

	1 (Did not face this problem at all)	2	3	4	5 (Faced this problem a lot)
a. Despite telling the government authorities that you wanted to provide relief work, not getting permission to go out	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Despite having requisite permissions, being harassed by the police	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Interference by the police or other government authorities in your work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Your staff or volunteers refused to work because of fear of the police	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

e. Apart from all this, did you face any other kinds of problems

8. In your experience, during the lockdown, how was the behaviour of the police with the following groups of people?

	Very good	Somewhat good	Neutral	Somewhat bad	Very bad	Police did not interact with them during the lockdown (Silent option)
a. NGO staff/volunteers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Homeless people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Residents of big societies or apartments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Slum dwellers/ residents of unauthorised colonies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Migrant workers trying to go back to their village or home state	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments

9. During the lockdown, in your experience, how frequently did the police use force against the common people?

1. Many times
2. Sometimes
3. Rarely
4. Never

10. Now I will read out some statements. Please tell me how helpful the police was in the following – very helpful, somewhat helpful, somewhat unhelpful or very unhelpful?

	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Somewhat unhelpful	Very unhelpful
a. Giving food/water/ration to the people	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Providing/arranging shelter for the people	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Helping migrant workers go to their village/home state	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Helping the needy people get essential items such as medicines, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments _____

11. In your experience, during the lockdown, did the police discriminate against the following groups or communities (probe whether highly discriminated against, somewhat discriminated against, hardly discriminated against or not discriminated against at all)?

	Highly discriminated against	Somewhat discriminated against	Hardly discriminated against	Did not discriminate against at all	Don't know/ No response
a. Muslims	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Women	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Men	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Poor people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Rich people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Migrants	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Locals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

h. Apart from this, was there any other community against whom the police discriminated during this period? If yes, which community?

12. Now I will read out some incidents to you. During the lockdown, how often did the following incidents come to your notice?

	Very frequently	Somewhat frequently	Rarely	Never	Don't know/ No response
a. Police stopped the migrant workers from going back to their home state/ village	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Police arrested people for violating lockdown norms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Physical assault by the police	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Migrant workers had to pay a bribe to the police to go back their village	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Common people had to pay a bribe to police to go out for necessary work such as buying medicines, grocery, etc. during the lockdown	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Except for coronavirus, people were not allowed to go to the hospital for any other illness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments

13. Were the police personnel whom you encountered during the lockdown following the lockdown norms—

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Wearing masks	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wearing gloves	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maintaining social distancing	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments.....

14. Now I will read out two statements. Please tell me which statement you agree with more.

I. During the lockdown, police were well equipped to deal with the situation and help the people

II. The police was not at all equipped to deal with the situation

1. Agree with the 1st statement
2. Agree with the 2nd statement
3. Disagree with both the statements

15. Do you agree or disagree with these terms (probe whether fully agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or fully disagree):

	Completely agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Completely disagree	Don't know/ No response
a. Police should not have been given the entire responsibility of enforcing the lockdown, other government agencies should also have had some responsibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. If people were informed of the lockdown earlier, then they would have faced lesser difficulties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. During the lockdown, the police was mostly performing non-police activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

16. There could be several reasons for the police to not be able to perform their duties properly during the lockdown. Now I will read out some such reasons which could have been a problem for the police personnel. Please tell me how much of a hindrance/problem the following were for the police – very big problem, somewhat big problem, somewhat small problem or not at all?

	Very big problem	Somewhat big problem	Somewhat small problem	Not a problem at all	Don't know/ No response
a. Unnecessarily strict rules of the lockdown	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Confusion regarding the rules of the lockdown	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Lack of training amongst the police forces	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Lack of resources such as ration etc. to help the people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Pressure from the government or the department to be strict with the public	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

f. Police personnel not wanting to help the public	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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Comments

17. In your experience:

	In rural areas	In urban areas	Both were the same (silent option)	Don't know/ No response
a. Where was the police stricter during the lockdown?	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Where did people get more facilities during the lockdown?	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. During the lockdown, the government had announced several helpline numbers, such as helplines for financial assistance to people, for coronavirus or health information, for migrant workers, etc. In the course of your work during the lockdown, did you try to call on any such helpline numbers?

1. Yes
2. Tried but the call didn't connect
3. No

Comments

19. If yes, which helpline number did you call?

Please specify.....

20. Did you get any assistance from the helpline number that you called?

1. Received full assistance
2. Received some assistance
3. Received very little assistance
4. Received no assistance at all

Comments

21. During the lockdown, the government had announced several helpline numbers, such as helplines for financial assistance to people, for coronavirus or health information, for migrant workers, etc. In the course of your work during the lockdown, did you try to call on any such helpline numbers?

1. Yes
2. Tried but the call didn't connect
3. No

Comments

22. If yes, which helpline number did you call?

Please specify.....

23. Did you get any assistance from the helpline number that you called?

1. Received full assistance
2. Received some assistance
3. Received very little assistance
4. Received no assistance at all

Comments

24. During the lockdown, besides the police, did you interact with any other government official or see them working on the ground?

1. Very frequently
2. Somewhat frequently
3. Rarely
4. Never

25. If yes, which government official did you see/interact with?

Please specify.....

26. How scared were you of getting infected with coronavirus during your work?

1. Very scared
2. Somewhat scared
3. Hardly scared
4. Not at all scared
5. I got infected with coronavirus (silent option)

27. In the course of your work during the lockdown, did you or your acquaintances encounter any situations in which the police was unduly strict or brutal with the people? If yes, please elaborate a little bit about it.

.....
.....

28. During your work, did you come across any instance/s during the lockdown where the police went out of its way to help people or treated the people well? If yes, please elaborate a little bit about it.

.....
.....

29. Overall, how satisfied are you with the work of the police during the lockdown?

1. Very satisfied
2. Somewhat satisfied
3. Somewhat dissatisfied
4. Very dissatisfied

Comments

30. Is there anything else you would like to tell us? (Comments section, question not to be read out in telephonic interviews)

.....
.....

Common Cause is a registered society dedicated to championing public causes, campaign for probity in public life and integrity of institutions. It seeks to promote democracy, good governance and public policy reforms thorough advocacy, interventions by formal and informal policy engagements. Common Cause is especially known for the difference it has made through a large number of Public Interest Litigations filed in the Courts, such as the recent ones on the cancellation of the entire telecom spectrum; cancellation of arbitrarily allocated coal blocks; Apex Court's recognition of the individual's right to die with dignity and legal validity of living will.

The **Centre for the Study of the Developing Societies (CSDS)** is one of India's leading institutes for research in the social sciences and humanities. Since its inception in 1963, the Centre has been known for its critical outlook on received models of development and progress. It is animated by a vision of equality and democratic transformation. Lokniti is a research programme of the CSDS established in 1997. It houses a cluster of research initiatives that seek to engage with national and global debates on democratic politics by initiating empirically grounded yet theoretically oriented studies. The large volume of data collected by Lokniti on party politics and voting behaviour has gone a long way in helping social science scholars making sense of Indian elections and democracy.

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